

# CHRISTIAN ORIENT

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## LITURGY

LIFE AND SALVATION IN THE EAST SYRIAC  
HOLY QURBANA

Dr. Jose Kochuparampil

INTEGRITY OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

Prof. John Moolan

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL CHARACTER OF THE  
PROPRIA OF THE QURBANA

Dr. George Thakadiyel

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## Editorial

**T**he liturgical heritage of a Church is the most significant element contributing to the identity of that individual Church. The liturgical heritage of the East Syriac tradition is thus of vital importance with regard to the ecclesial identity of the Churches of this tradition. The present issue of *Christian Orient* is an in-depth study of some of the remarkable features of the East Syriac liturgy.

The first article by Dr. Jose Kochuparampil on the relevance of the theme of life and salvation in the prayers of the East Syriac Qurbana sheds much light on the soteriological dimension of this Qurbana. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Second Vatican Council's constitution on Liturgy, views liturgy as the milieu par excellence for the accomplishment of the work of redemption (SC 2). The teaching of the Council in this regard is especially true about the East Syriac Qurbana. Fr. Kochuparampil makes a rather thorough analysis of the prayers of the East Syriac Qurbana, which explicitly manifest the theme of life and salvation.

The author shows us that the celebration of Holy Eucharist is the paramount place where the life and salvation of Christ is offered, communicated and experienced. He presents the liturgy as the locus of sound soteriology. Christ is shown as the integral saviour (Lord of all) of the entire world.

The Eucharistic prayers in the East Syriac tradition demonstrate life or salvation

as the prime theme of the celebration of the Eucharist. The East Syriac Eucharistic prayers are eloquent witness to the aspect of life and salvation. The progress of the liturgical celebration demonstrates that it is a ritual re-enactment of the very salvific actions of Christ. The liturgy of the Eucharist carries on the same redemptive action of Christ, and it is offered to each participant. Fr. Kochuparampil's study of the prayers of the Qurbana, comparing the Assyrian and Malabar Taksas provides us with a clear insight on the salvific significance of the Qurbana.

The second article is a profound historical and theological study of the sacraments of initiation in the West and East. Dr. Moolan discusses the question of the integrity of the sacraments of initiation. He analyses the theological significance of the united celebration of the sacraments of initiation. It is indeed the integral celebration of the birth and growth in Christian life. These are integrally given as the sacraments of gateway or door to the Church.

Dr. Moolan shows us how these sacraments were gradually separated in the West. However, the Orientals never lost the integrity of the initiation rite. They keep up the strict link between the sacraments of initiation due to the great role of these sacraments in spiritual growth as, new creation, new strengthening, and new vivification of the members in the Church. The sacraments of initiation help the faithful to incorporate their lives into the mystery of Christ and his Church. The incorporation into



the mysteries of death and resurrection takes place through baptism; the incorporation into the mysteries of ascension and Pentecost takes place through Chrismation and the incorporation into the mystery of the Eucharist takes place through the Holy Communion.

Thus the sacraments of initiation, celebrated together as one unit, give full entry to the Church, the mystical body of Christ.

The third article on the eschatological character of the *propria* of the East Syriac Qurbana, and especially the Syro-Malabar Qurbana, makes a synthetic study of the proper prayers of the East Syriac Qurbana found in the *Hudra*. Dr. Thakidiyel, helps us through this article to make a quick survey of the East Syriac *Hudra*. The author of this article gives us a solid introduction to *Hudra*, which is the source of *propria*. Fr. Thakidiyel starts his study analyzing the various elements of the *propria*. The author is looking for the eschatological features of the *propria*. He shows us the eschatological orientation as one of the chief characteristics of the Liturgical Year. Although the arrangement of the liturgical seasons of the East Syriac tradition appears to be 'historical' in the celebration of the economy of salvation, the prayers and hymns in the *Hudra* for all the nine seasons bear witness to the eschatological character of the liturgical year and that of the East Syriac liturgy as a whole. According to the author of this study, the last seasons of the liturgical year, namely, the Elia-Cross, Moses and Dedication of the Church are filled with eschatological themes. These seasons lead to the first periods of Annunciation- Nativity and *Denha* which are also closely linked with the notion of Parousia (2 Thes 2:8).

The author emphasises the fact that the liturgical assembly experiences a real foretaste of the heavenly bliss through its participation in the celebration of the Qurbana. The Divine Liturgy gives not only a beautiful picture of delightful life in heaven but also a sad portrait of the eternal death and destruction of man in hell. The *Hudra* speaks about the eschatological punishment that awaits the wicked ones. The liturgical prayers testify that the death of Christ on the cross was a turning point in the history of the whole mankind

An important eschatological theme that we find in the prayers of the *Hudra* is that of the nuptial celebration in the kingdom of heaven. The *Propria* give a beautiful picture of the celestial glory of the saints, apostles and martyrs.

In the conclusion of his study, Dr. Thakidiyel makes a critical appraisal of the new *Propria* of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana. According to the author, the new *Propria* do not do justice to the sources of the East Syriac *Hudra*. Many important prayers have been eliminated, new ones have been added and the translators have changed the sense of many prayers without any discretion. The author is of firm conviction that the eschatological character which is predominant in the prayers of the Qurbana is almost totally absent in these newly formulated prayers.

All the three articles are profound studies on the richness of the liturgical and theological heritage of the East Syriac tradition. We hope that these studies would be of immense help for those who want to know more about the East Syriac heritage.





# Life and Salvation In the East Syriac Holy Qurbana

Dr. Jose Kochuparampil

## Introduction

Anton Baumstark, in his classic work *Comparative Liturgy* makes a striking observation on liturgy: "In liturgy we become aware of the living heart of the Church," where our "prayers ascend to the Throne of God and the sacramental grace descends upon the common life of the faithful and we are aware of the powerful stream of 'life' which pulsates through the Mystical body of Christ, who the apostle said 'died once for all,' so that death shall no longer have dominion over Him."<sup>1</sup> Liturgy is an encounter with the life of God, which is a 'salvation-encounter.' Vatican II Constitution on Liturgy articulates this fact in the outset of the document: "For it is the liturgy through which, especially in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist, the work of our redemption is accomplished."<sup>2</sup> The same constitution goes on to say that Christ has "also willed that the work of salvation which the apostles preached should be set in train through the sacrifice and sacraments, around which the entire liturgical life revolves."<sup>3</sup> The celebration of Holy Eucharist is the paramount place where the life and salvation

of Christ is offered, communicated and experienced. However, in the wake of pervasive influence the new generation Christian sects, and eastern religious groups and the relativistic tendencies of secularisation and materialism, the aspect of real and blissful life and salvation enunciated in the traditional liturgies has been overlooked. Is the reality of true life and salvation being obfuscated in the extensive rituals and prayers of the Church? Or is it not at all well expressed in the traditional liturgies? However, the fact is just on the contrary when we examine the East Syriac Holy Qurbana as a case in point. This study is an attempt to delineate the most expressed theme of salvation in the broader perspective of anaphoras, focusing on the East Syriac Holy Qurbana.

## 1. Life and Salvation: A Comparative Glimpse at the Traditional Anaphoras

Traditional liturgical prayers abound in their references to the life and salvation to the extent that most of them are an all-embracing premise of the liturgy. For example the thanksgiving prayer in *Didache*

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<sup>1</sup> A. Baumstark, *Comparative Liturgy*, Westminster-Maryland 1958, 1.

<sup>2</sup> SC 2.

<sup>3</sup> SC 6.



in Chapter nine mentions the "Life and knowledge" which God has made known through His "child Jesus." Thanksgiving prayer in chapter ten, pleads for "the knowledge, faith and immortality which God has made known through His child Jesus."<sup>4</sup>

The final form of the Liturgy of St Mark confesses in its preface: "... You reformed and renewed him [man] through this awesome, life-giving and heavenly mystery..."<sup>5</sup> The Egyptian Anaphora of St. Basil recounts, "He [Christ] showed us the way of salvation, granted us to be reborn from above by water and the Spirit, and made us a people for our own possession, sanctifying us by His Holy Spirit..."<sup>6</sup> The Egyptian prayer of Serapion praises the Father for the life and Salvation: "We praise you Father, provider of immortality: you are the fountain of life, the fountain of light, the fountain of all grace and all truth, lover of man and lover of the poor, you reconcile yourself to all and draw all to yourself through the coming of your beloved Son."<sup>7</sup> The Anaphora of St James states: "Later you sent your only begotten son into the world to renew your image ... he dwelt among men and ordered everything for the salvation of our race."<sup>8</sup> The Byzantine liturgy of St Basil vividly narrates the salvation experience in Christ:

"And having become a citizen of this world, He gave us commandments of salvation, ... and brought us to the knowledge of you, the true God and Father; He gained us for himself, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; and when He has cleansed us with water and sanctified us by the Holy Spirit, He gave himself as a ransom to death, by which we were held, having been sold under sin."<sup>9</sup> The Epiclesis of the Anaphora of the Twelve Apostles entreats that the Eucharist may be "to all who partake in them for life and resurrection, for forgiveness of sins, and health of soul and body, and enlightenment of mind and defence before the dread judgement-seat of Christ ..., that we may enjoy Your heavenly, immortal and life-giving mysteries through Your grace and mercy and love for man now and ages to ages."<sup>10</sup> The epiclesis of the Anaphora of St John Chrysostom also makes similar plea: "So that they (the body and blood) may become to those who partake for vigilance of soul, for fellowship with the Holy Spirit, for the fullness of the kingdom of heaven, for boldness towards you but not for judgment or condemnation."<sup>11</sup> The Roman Canon confesses, "... we do offer to your excellent majesty from your gifts and bounty a pure victim, an unspotted victim, the holy bread

<sup>4</sup> JC = R.C.D Jasper & G.J. Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed. Texts Translated and Edited with Commentary*, 3rd ed. New York 1987, 23.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 133.



of eternal life and the cup of everlasting salvation."<sup>12</sup>

## 2. The Terminology for Life and Salvation in East Syriac Liturgy

As in the case of ancient Anaphoras, the characteristics of life and salvation are richly referred to with a wealth of expressions in the East Syriac Liturgy. It is notable that the term *hayā* means both life as well as salvation in Syriac.<sup>13</sup> *M'hayana*, a term derived from it means life-giving, quickening or vivifying, has several occurrence in the liturgy, associated with the name of God, the eucharistic mysteries and Holy Qurbana, describing them to bring about salvation.<sup>14</sup> Another term that is associated with salvation is *purqānā* deriving from the root *prq*, which means redemption, ransom or salvation.<sup>15</sup> The term *hasi* and its related

terms like *hasyānā*, *mhasyānā*, means propitiation, atonement, purging, or pardon.<sup>16</sup> The root *šbq* and words like *šbuk*, *šubqānā* also have soteriological connotation in Syriac, expressing liberation, pardon and forgiveness.<sup>17</sup> The use of the word *zbn*, which mean to buy, ransom or redeem has implications of salvation.<sup>18</sup> The terms like *paça*, *paçitā* (= deliver from evil),<sup>19</sup> *šare*, *šaryā* (= release, liberate, acquit, remit or dissolve)<sup>20</sup> *anehm* (= vivify), *azadeq* (=justify), *anahar* (=illuminate), also have salvific bearing in the liturgy.<sup>21</sup> The Eucharistic species are associated with purification and sanctification, which is expressed by the term *qdš*, and *metqdaš*.<sup>22</sup> There are also terms like *mdabbrānutā* (= divine dispensation),<sup>23</sup> *qublā* (= acceptance), *škahtā* (finding out), *punyā* (= return),<sup>24</sup> *sabrā rabbā* (= great hope), *hayyē d-hadtā*

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 165.

<sup>13</sup> J. Payne Smith (Mrs. Margoliout), *A Compendious Syriac English Dictionary Founded upon the Thesaurus Syriacus* of R. Payne Smith, Oxford 1903, reprint, 1985, 123.

<sup>14</sup> Payne Smith, *Syriac English Dictionary* 264; Cf. *Liturgy* = J. Kelayta, ed., *The Liturgy of the Church of the East: Thaksa D-Qudašā* (Syr. text) Mosul 1928, reprint with Syriac-Malayalam text, Trichur 1973, 24, 32, 44, etc. ET: *The Liturgy of the Holy Apostles Addai and Mari Together with the Liturgies of Mar Theodorus and Mar Nestorius and the Order of Baptism*, trans., K.A. Paul & G. Mookken, Trichur 1967.

<sup>15</sup> Payne Smith, *Syriac English Dictionary*, 439; *Liturgy*, 34 (syr).

<sup>16</sup> Payne Smith, *Syriac English Dictionary*, 150; cf. *Liturgy*, 10, 14, 18 (syr), etc.

<sup>17</sup> Payne Smith, *Syriac English Dictionary*, 555, 557; cf. *Liturgy*, 18, 32 (syr).

<sup>18</sup> Payne Smith, *Syriac English Dictionary* 109; cf. *Liturgy*, 19, (syr).

<sup>19</sup> Payne Smith, *Syriac English Dictionary*, 454; Cf. *Liturgy*, 81 (syr).

<sup>20</sup> Payne Smith, *Syriac English Dictionary*, 598; cf. *Liturgy*, 82 (syr).

<sup>21</sup> *Liturgy*, 53 (syr).

<sup>22</sup> Payne Smith, 491; *Liturgy*, 34, 43 (syr).

<sup>23</sup> *Liturgy*, 63. There is a study on this entire theme in, J. Chittilappilly, *Mdabbranuta: The Divine Dispensation of Our Lord in the Holy Qurbana of East Syrian Tradition: A Liturgico-Theological Study*, (OIRSI 226) Kottayam 1999.

<sup>24</sup> Payne Smith, *Syriac English Dictionary*, 142; cf. *Liturgy*, 70 (syr).



(= new life),<sup>25</sup> *pumē ptiḥē w- apē yaliatā* (= with open face and unveiled lips),<sup>26</sup> and *parḥsyā* (= with open face),<sup>27</sup> *hayē l'lmā* (= eternal life)<sup>28</sup> all of them indicating aspects of salvation and new life.

### 3. Life and Salvation: A Textual Study of East Syriac Qurbana

Here we make an attempt to delineate how life and salvation are expressed, confessed and communicated in the Church's celebration of the liturgy. The whole course of the liturgy gives an impression that the experience of salvation in the East Syriac Eucharistic liturgy is something that is already—but-not yet. The prayers and rituals are so unfolded that the whole assembly, the celebrant as well as the ministers and faithful undergo a process of purification and sanctification leading to the experience of salvation relived in view of its fulfilment in the world to come.<sup>29</sup>

#### 3.1. The Enarxis: *Mandatum* and *Gloria*

The enarxis, which is an introduction to the whole liturgy and to the liturgy of the Word in particular, points to the goal of the ritual celebration, sanctification and salvation. In the Malabar liturgy the *enarxis* opens with two catchwords, *Puqdankon-Puqdanē Dmašihā*<sup>30</sup> – recalling the Institution of the

Holy sacrifice at the Last Supper and the *mandatum* (Lk 22: 19-20). This is a pointed reference to the redemptive core of the liturgy at the outset of the celebration. Eucharist is a divine reality, where “the body is broken for the life of the world” (Jn 6:51) and “the blood is shed for many towards the remission of sins” (Mt 26:28).

The *Gloria* that follows<sup>31</sup> also bears salvific overtone that the angelic hymn goes together with the *mandatum*, again showing the divine initiative for salvation that originates from heaven to earth, and how it is attained: The Syriac version of the text, “peace and good hope to men on earth” – (Lk 2:15), points out that the true liberation and salvation is inaugurated through the incarnation. It means that the heavenly peace and salvation of Christ (Jn 14:27) is at hand to all those who render glory to God in heaven, through the way that the Son has taught us.

#### 3.1.1. The Initial Our Father

The initial *Pater Noster* is to incorporate the whole celebration within the prayer of Christ, in which the plea for the coming of the kingdom, the realization of the will of God, the petitions for food, and deliverance from trespasses and from evil

<sup>25</sup> *Liturgy*, 56, 62-63, 71, 76 (syr).

<sup>26</sup> *Liturgy*, 45, 63 (syr).

<sup>27</sup> *Liturgy*, 48 (syr).

<sup>28</sup> *Liturgy*, 72, 84 (syr).

<sup>29</sup> In order to get the whole picture, we take texts from the Assyrian as well as Syro-Malabar taksas for our study.

<sup>30</sup> *The Order of the Raza*, Ernakulam-Changanacherry, 1986, 5; *Order of the Mysteries*, Syriac editio typica, Rome 2003, 12.

<sup>31</sup> *Raza*, 4.



one are consistent with the theme of salvation.

### 3.1.2. First Priestly Prayer

The first priestly prayer for Sundays and Feast days sets the tone of the whole prayers in the liturgy that the goal of the liturgy is new life and redemption. Employing East Syriac Christological terminology, it recounts that the holy mysteries of the Eucharist are “‘given’ through the mercy of your beloved Son to us for the renewal (*hudatā*) and redemption of our frail (human) nature (*purqanē d kanyan halašē*).<sup>32</sup>

The prayer designated for the Feast of the Lord is still more eloquent on the salvific dimensions of the whole celebration. It entreats to strengthen the celebrant to administer the ‘absolving/propitiating mysteries’ (*‘rāzē mhasyānē*) with purified bodies, souls and undefiled hearts in order to praise God on account of the ‘salvation’ he has ‘granted’ us (*purqānā d škan*) by his divine mercies.<sup>33</sup> This priestly prayer proposes that the celebration of the Eucharist is a celebration of the gift of salvation.

### 3.1.3. The *Marmita*

The selection of Psalm in the *Marmita*, which is a collection of three psalms, for feast days, are carefully drawn to express the Lord’s promise of salvation for all those who are oppressed, marginalized and

underprivileged. Psalm 144 exalts Lord, the King:

“The Lord supports that are falling,  
And lifts up that are bowed down.”  
“The eyes of all are raised unto you,  
For you give them food on their due time.”<sup>34</sup>

The Psalm 145 which follows, takes up the same theme:

The Lord gives bread to the hungry,  
The Lord releases the prisoners;  
The Lord opens the eyes of the blind;  
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down,  
The lord loves the just and protects the poor;  
He supports the fatherless and widows,  
And they of the wicked he turns astray.<sup>35</sup>  
The next Psalm 146 also extends this train of thought:

The Lord builds up Jerusalem,  
And he gathers again the dispersed of Israel;  
He heals the broken heart, and binds up their hurts ...

The Lord lifts up the poor,  
And fells the wicked to the ground.<sup>36</sup>

Whereas the *Marmita* for Feast Days recounts the salvation that the Lord grants to the poor and oppressed, the *Marmita* for ordinary days sings Psalm 15, 150; 117, which, focus the inner preparation on the part of the worshipper, the purification of conscience and thanksgiving in order to arrive at the salvation of the Lord. The Psalm

<sup>32</sup> *Liturgy*, 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Liturgy*, 4 (Syr); 2 (ET).

<sup>34</sup> *Raṣa*, 9.

<sup>35</sup> *Raṣa*, 10.

<sup>36</sup> *Raṣa*, 11.



15 is very pertinent here, which helps the assembly to stand before the altar of God with pure hearts and mind. Who is a true worshipper? To whom is the salvation offered? One who dwells in the tabernacle of the Lord and abides on his holy mountain; he who walks uprightly and works righteously and speaks the truth in his heart and he who does not deceive by his tongue; he who does no evil to his brother and he who does not accept bribes against his neighbour; he who does not cheat his fellowmen and does not put his money to usury, he who does not take any reward against the innocent. He who does this are the just and are rendered true worshippers in the way of salvation.<sup>37</sup>

#### 3.1.4. The Onita D-Qanke: The Anthem of the Sanctuary

The Anthem of the Sanctuary is the processional hymn towards the bema during which the assembly venerates the Holy Cross. The prayer introducing the anthem mentions the redemptive power of the "forgiving altar" (*madbahā mhasyānā*), that is established by the power of God.<sup>38</sup> The Anthem of the Sanctuary is a true hymn on salvation, which praises the redemptive power of the symbol of Cross.

"The Cross that has been the cause of our good and by which our mortal humanity

was set free, be for us, O Lord, a strong fortress, and by this cross we shall overcome the wicked one and all his devices."<sup>39</sup>

#### 3.1.5. Lakhu Mara Hymn

The Hymn *Lakhu Mara* (You O Lord) is the culminating point of the Enarxis, which confesses Christ as the saviour of mankind. The rites, prayers and hymns associated with *Lakhu Mara* are also embedded with the theme of salvation. The incense prayer that precedes it, entreats for 'honour' of God and for 'redemption' of his folk.<sup>40</sup> The *Lakhu Mara* hymn was originally sung during the celebrant entrance from the sanctuary with the opening of the veil, and with deacons and other ministers bearing the cross, gospel, incense and lights. The whole rite is indicative of a solemn reception to Christ, the Saviour from heaven, through the symbols of Cross and gospel. The prayers introducing *Lakhu Mara* present Church, that is in a state of spiritual bliss, sometimes unable to thank God enough, and showing the hope of salvation, that already and not-yet. The prayer for Sundays and feast days pleads:

"When the sweet odour of the delight of your love, our Lord and our God breathes upon us, and our souls are illumined by the knowledge of your truth, may we be made worthy to face the revelation of your Beloved from heaven, and there to confess you and

<sup>37</sup> *Liturgy*, 4-7 (Syr) ; 3-4 (ET).

<sup>38</sup> *Liturgy*, 7 (Syr) ; 5 (ET).

<sup>39</sup> *Raza*, 13.

<sup>40</sup> *Liturgy*, 13.



glorify you without ceasing in thy adored church, filled with all aids and blessings..."<sup>41</sup>

The prayer on memorial and ferial days also shares the same experience of salvation:

For all your helps and graces towards us which cannot be repaid, we confess and glorify you without ceasing in your crowned Church filled with all aids and blessing...<sup>42</sup>

The *Lakhu Mara* hymn extols Christ as the saviour of the body and soul:

Lord of all, we praise you;  
Jesus Christ we glorify you;  
For you are the quickener of our bodies  
And the gracious saviour of our souls

Whereas its following collect, employing the tripartite division of man, praises Christ as the saviour of our body (*pagrā*), soul (*napšā*), and life (*hayā*) (I Thes 5: 23).<sup>43</sup> This hymn and the collect confess in the enarxis that Christ is the integral saviour (Lord of all)<sup>44</sup> of the entire world.

### 3.2. Life and Salvation in the Liturgy of the Word

The liturgy of the Word is introduced by *trisagion*, which beseeches "the holy, mighty and immortal God," who is capable

of all helps and mercy. *Trisagion* is introduced by the deacons' admonition to praise the living God ('*lāhā hayā*'),<sup>45</sup> meaning both the 'living God' and the Saving God as well. Moreover, *trisagion* is reminiscent of Isaiah's vision leading to the purification and commissioning of the prophet (Is 6:1-13), and is thus inviting the worshipping community to go through the same experience of revelation of God, purification and divine mandate from him to witness to the Word of God. The prayer before reading epistle is a case in point for the redemptive aspects of the Word of God:

Illuminate our Lord and our God, the impulses of our thoughts that we may listen and understand the sweet hearings of your life-giving [*mahyānē*] and divine commands; and in your grace and mercies grant that we may gather from them profit love, and salvation [*purqānā*], which are serviceable both to the soul and to the body and that we may sing to you constant praise without ceasing at all times, O Lord of all...<sup>46</sup>

In the following prayer the gospel is presented as the light that illumines rational beings and enlightens our souls. The prayer beseeches for the graces to meditate on the scriptures and be guided by God's "life-giving

<sup>41</sup> *Liturgy*, 7 (ET).

<sup>42</sup> *Liturgy*, 10 (Syr) ; 6-7 (ET).

<sup>43</sup> *Raza*, 13; *Liturgy*, 11-12 (Syr).

<sup>44</sup> The expression 'all' (*kol*) has deep theological significance in Syriac Fathers: cf. P.J. Botha, "The Theology of Totality: Ephrem the Syrian's Use of Particle *kol* (all)," in E.A. Livingstone, ed., *Papers Presented at the Eleventh International Patristic Studies Held in Oxford 1991* (SP 25, Louvain 1993) 223-228.

<sup>45</sup> *Liturgy*, 12 (Syr).

<sup>46</sup> *Liturgy*, 13-14 (Syr); 9-10 (ET).



and divine commands" (*puḡdanaik mhyānē 'lāhiyē*).<sup>47</sup>

Another instance pointing to life and salvation is the priestly prayer while taking the gospel for reading: "Glory to the everlasting mercies which has sent you to us, O Christ, light of the world and 'life of all'" (*hayē dḡol*).<sup>48</sup>

The Anthem of the gospel spells out the redemptive role of the gospel, which is presented as the book of "our redeemer Christ, the King" (*maklā mšihā pārōkan*)<sup>49</sup>. The *turgama*, an interpretative hymn before the gospel abounds in the reference to life and salvation: the gospel heals the body and gives life to the soul; it is filled with life and happiness; the life-giving words chase away devils and evil spirits; gospel is the door to heavenly abode; it is light, truth and life, etc.<sup>50</sup>

The silent prayer just before the gospel reading illustrates the trajectory of the path of salvation through the Word of God:

(i) Make us wise in your law; (ii) enlighten our minds through your knowledge and (iii) sanctify our souls by your truth, (iv) that we may be obedient to fulfill your commandments at all times, Lord of all...<sup>51</sup>

The prayer of incense that refers to the sweet scent, which wafted from Christ and filled the whole house (Jn 12: 3),<sup>52</sup> and the holding of two lights during the reading of gospel,<sup>53</sup> indicate the purifying and illuminating power of the Word of God.

The inclination prayer before the dismissal of the catechumens presents the worshipping Church as a redeemed society, which is the sheep of his pasture, 'purchased' (*ezdban*) by the great passion of Christ."<sup>54</sup>

### 3.3. Life and Salvation in Pre-Anaphora

The rites and prayers in the pre-anaphora are also rich in their references to salvation. The first of its kind appears in the rites of washing of hands: "May the Lord of all remove the uncleanness of our debts and our sins by the sprinkling of his compassion, and he may wash away the stains of our offences in the immense ocean of his mercy."<sup>55</sup>

The prayer while raising the chalice and paten in the form of a cross at the altar recounts the salvific dimension of the holy Qurbana: "May Christ who was sacrificed for our redemption (*puḡqānan*), and who has commanded us to make a commemoration of his death and burial and resurrection;

<sup>47</sup> *Liturgy*, 15 (Syr);

<sup>48</sup> *Liturgy*, 13-14 (Syr); 11 (ET).

<sup>49</sup> *Raḡa*, 12.

<sup>50</sup> *Raḡa*, 23-24.

<sup>51</sup> *Raḡa*, 25.

<sup>52</sup> *Raḡa*, 21.

<sup>53</sup> *Raḡa*, 26.

<sup>54</sup> *Liturgy*, 19 (Syr); 13 (ET).

<sup>55</sup> *Raḡa*, 35.



accept this sacrifice at our hands..."<sup>56</sup> This short text articulates that the source of our redemption is the sacrifice of Christ, the effect of which is communicated in the celebration of the Church. During Lent, a prayer is appended to it again pointing to the redemption and life: "Let the holy mysteries completed for our salvation (*purqānan*) by the grace and mercy of Christ, be for the redemption (*husāyā*) of those people who receive them forever."<sup>57</sup> The altar, upon which the gifts are placed, is qualified as the propitiatory altar (*madbahā mahsyānā*).<sup>58</sup>

The inclination prayer before the Great Entrance demonstrates the worshipping community as a people called to purification and renewal for the celebration of the liturgy:

Our hearts being sprinkled and cleansed from an evil conscience, may we be made worthy to enter into the exalted and the most holy place and to stand in 'purity and sanctity and holiness' (*dakyait zahyait w-qdišait*) before your altar and to offer you spiritual and reasonable sacrifices in true faith.<sup>59</sup>

The *kārōzutā* of the deacon during the great entrance also takes on the theme of salvation and life: "...The Lord may crown them at the resurrection from the dead and give us too, along with them a good hope, 'inheritance and life in the kingdom of

heaven' (*yārtutā w-hayē b-malkūtā dšmayā*)... May this oblation be accepted ... That it may be for us 'help and salvation and for life eternal' (*udrānā wl-purqānā wl-hayē dl-'lam 'lmin*) in the kingdom of heaven by the grace of Christ."<sup>60</sup>

The prayer attributed to Barsauma during the Great Entrance affirms the universal dimension of the redemptive oblation:

... You have drawn me near to thee in your compassion and you have set me as a known member in the great body of your holy catholic Church that I may offer before you this 'living, holy and acceptable sacrifice' (*dbhtā hādā haytā w-qadištā w-mqabltā*) which is the memorial of the passion and death and burial and resurrection of our lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in whom you are well pleased and reconciled to forgive the sins of all mankind.<sup>61</sup>

The *kušāpā* (silent petition of priest) before the Anaphora also specifies pardon and salvation as the goal of the celebration: "... give us strength and efficacy that this sacrifice may obtain pardon (*lmhasyw*) for our sins."<sup>62</sup>

### 3.4 Redemptive Aspects in Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari

The source of all references to life and salvation is to be found in the anaphoral

<sup>56</sup> *Liturgy*, 23 (Syr); 15 (ET).

<sup>57</sup> *Liturgy*, 23 (Syr); 16 (ET).

<sup>58</sup> *Liturgy*, 24 (Syr); 16 (ET).

<sup>59</sup> *Liturgy*, 26 (Syr); 17 (ET).

<sup>60</sup> *Liturgy*, 31 (Syr); 20 (ET).

<sup>61</sup> *Liturgy*, 32 (Syr); 21 (ET).

<sup>62</sup> *Liturgy*, 37 (Syr); 23 (ET).



section, which is the most early and basic stratum of the liturgical prayers. We find quite a number of instances expressing the salvific dimensions of the Eucharist in the anaphoral prayers called G'hanta (anaphoral inclination prayer with palms opened), and their associated prayers.

The reference to life and salvation first appears in the *kušāpa* during the Kiss of Peace, which describes the Qurbana as 'living and holy' (*hayfā w-qadištā*).<sup>63</sup> The incense following the first G'hanta also refers to the "pardon (*husāyā*) of your servants and your folk."<sup>64</sup> The *kūšāpā* before the second G'hanta presents the service of the liturgy (*tesmestā*) as 'living and holy' (*haytā w-qadištā*), expressing its redemptive merit.

The second G'hanta before Sanctus presents salvation as the first premise of the course of anamnestic section: "You (the trinity) did create the world by his grace and its inhabitants in his kindness and 'who did save the mankind' (*praq bnaināšā*) by his compassion and has shown great grace unto the mortals."<sup>65</sup>

The *kušāpā* during Sanctus, embracing the sentiments of Isaiah in his heavenly vision, (Is 6:1-13) beseeches for purification and sanctification, leading to salvation: "Purge our unseemliness and sanctify our lips and mingle our Lord, the voices of our needs with the

'holies' of the Seraphim and the hallelujahs of the angels."<sup>66</sup>

The third G'hanta is the central redemptive narration in the whole liturgy, which is in fact an unparalleled mystical recount of the aspects of salvation bestowed upon the humanity through incarnation of Christ:

You have shown us great grace, which cannot be repaid, in that you did put on our humanity that you might quicken [revived/enliven –*thayen*] by your Godhead, and you have exalted our lowliness and has restored us from our fall, you have raised us from our mortality and you have forgiven our debts and justified us from our sins, you have enlightened our knowledge and has condemned, O our Lord and our God, our enemies, and granted victory to the weakness of our frail nature in the abundant mercies of your grace.<sup>67</sup>

The intercessory *kušāpa* following the doxology points to the universal dimension of salvation, that the oblation is offered for all sections of the Church and for the world, especially the poor, oppressed and afflicted. Christ gave his life for the ransom of many (Mt 10: 28), and this is the *rationale* of the anaphoral intercessory prayers, which in turn, manifests the comprehensive dimension of the Church's sacrifice. The Qurbana is offered for all the holy Catholic Church; for

<sup>63</sup> *Liturgy*, 44 (Syr); 28 (ET).

<sup>64</sup> *Liturgy*, 47 (Syr); 29 (ET).

<sup>65</sup> *Liturgy*, 49-50 (Syr); 31 (ET). The Syro-Malabar Text misses this crucial point of salvation.

<sup>66</sup> *Liturgy*, 52 (Syr); 32-33 (ET).

<sup>67</sup> *Liturgy*, 53 (Syr); 33 (ET).



the prophets, apostles, martyrs and confessors; for all mourners and afflicted; for the needy and harassed; for priests, kings and authorities; for the sick and distressed; for the dead and departed; for the people who celebrate the Qurbana; and for the celebrant.<sup>68</sup>

Similarly the *kušāpā* for the dead also present a rich category of all visible and invisible world, thus expressing the diachronic and synchronic aspects of the celebration. The Qurbana is offered:

For the peace and safety of the world; for the preservation of your holy Church of God; for the increase of the true faith; for the exaltation of the righteous; For the absolution [*husāyē d-hatayē*] of the sinners; for the acceptance of the penitents; (for the seeking out of the lost; for the existence of the household) ; for the return of those who are far off; for the encouragement of the weak; for the strengthening of the harassed; for the comforting of the distressed; for the healing of the sick; for the support of the poor; for a good memorial of the departed...<sup>69</sup>

Together with this, provision is left for priest to mention other intentions, or names to be added to these petitions.<sup>70</sup>

The fourth G'hanta is "the Anaphoral Intercession, which is the source and inspiration of the above mentioned *kušapa*.

The universal redemptive sacrifice of Christ sets in motion the intercessions of the Church, remembering the "just and righteous Fathers who have been well pleasing before God," extending from the prophets, apostles and martyrs, and each member of the Church to "all inhabitants of the earth."<sup>71</sup>

The first petition in this intercession is for "your rest and peace (*šaynak w-šlamak*) in all days of the world. Here the phrase "rest and peace of God" stands for the salvation from God. For example the Syriac gospel, Mt 11: 28, "come to me all who labour and are heavy laden, I shall give you *rest*, take my yoke upon you and learn from me I am humble and *restful*" presents *rest* as an attribute of the life with Christ as well as a gift of being with Christ. Entering into *God's rest* signifies the life and salvation in God as Ps 95:7-11 and Heb 3:11; 4:3 point out. Hence, the petition for "rest and peace" points to the redemptive dimension of the Eucharistic liturgy.

The following part of the intercessory petition shows that all the inhabitants of the earth finds "rest and peace" through the knowledge of the unique Saviour of the world, who was sent from the only true God, the Father. Through the life-giving/saving gospel (*sabartē mahyānitā*), the Son taught "all purity and holiness" (*kōlē dakyūtā w-qadišūtā*) of the members of the Church throughout the ages; (of the prophets,

<sup>68</sup> *Liturgy*, 54-55 (Syr); 34-35 (ET).

<sup>69</sup> *Liturgy*, 35-36 (ET).

<sup>70</sup> *Liturgy*, 58 (Syr); 37 (ET).

<sup>71</sup> *Liturgy*, 60 (Syr); 38 (ET).



apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, teachers, priests, deacons and the children of the catholic church who were signed by the life-giving/saving sign (*rūšmē hayā*) of baptism).<sup>72</sup> Here the mention of 'life-giving/salvation; gospel, 'purity and holiness' and "life-giving sign of baptism," all, refers to the salvation and new life in Christ.

The anamnesis that concludes the intercession also refers to the salvific dimension of the qurbana:

Your miserable servants who are assembled in your name ... rejoicing and glorifying and exalting and commemorating and celebrating unto you this great and awful and holy and life-giving and divine mystery [*qadišā mhyānā w- 'lahāyā*] of the passion and death and burial and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ [*pārōqan Išō 'Mšiha*]...<sup>73</sup>

### 3.4.1. Life and Salvation in Epiclesis

The epiclesis spells out the process of sanctification of those who partake in the Eucharist leading to salvation and new life in heaven: "...that it may be to us, O my Lord, pardon of debts, and for the forgiveness of sins and for the hope of resurrection from the dead and for the new life [*hayē hadatē*] in the kingdom of heaven with all those who

have been well pleasing to you."<sup>74</sup> The prayer that follows also is imbued by the sense of salvation: "For all this great and wonderful dispensation/salvation economy [*mdabbranūtā*] towards us, we confess you and glorify you without ceasing within your Church redeemed [*pariqā*] by the precious blood of your Christ with unclosed mouths and unveiled faces."<sup>75</sup>

The whole anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari brings to our attention that salvation is the action of the Trinity. The original part of the anaphora begins with the adoration of the Trinity for creation and salvation. It proceeds to the next *G'hanta*, which addressed to Christ enumerates the experience of salvation brought about by him. And finally, at epiclesis the Holy Spirit is invoked to come over the gifts, so that those who partake in them may attain salvation and eternal life.

### 3.5. Life and Salvation in Anaphora of Theodore

The salvific references are much more pronounced and pervasive in the Liturgy of Theodore,<sup>76</sup> which is intended to be used from the first Sunday of Annunciation-Nativity till Palm Sunday.

<sup>72</sup> *Liturgy*, 61 (Syr); 38-397 (ET).

<sup>73</sup> *Liturgy*, 62 (Syr); 39 (ET).

<sup>74</sup> *Liturgy*, 62-63 (Syr); 39 (ET).

<sup>75</sup> *Liturgy*, 63 (Syr); 39 (ET).

<sup>76</sup> On the origin, text and commentary of this anaphora, see B.D. Spinks, *Mar Nestorius and Mar Theodore the Interpreter*, Cambridge 1999; For a survey of studies with latest findings, see J. Kochuparampil, "The Historical Background and the Theological Perspectives of The Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia," *Christian Orient*, 26, 3 (2005) 39-50.



The first G'hanta experientially confesses the salvation through the 'awful dispensation (*dabbrānūtā*)' of Christ: "You, who in a wonderful and awful dispensation which your only begotten, Our Lord Jesus Christ, effected through our humanity, have brought for us a 'restoration to new life' [*hūddātā d-hayē hadātā*] and have given the pledge of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, and further have made us worthy by your grace, of the knowledge of these glorious and holy mysteries... so that we not only offer and accomplish them but may also partake and have communion in them."<sup>77</sup> The prayer goes on to confess that Qurbana of the Church is "living, holy, acceptable and bloodless" [*haytā w-qadištā w-mqablatā w-dlā dmā*].<sup>78</sup>

The Dialogue Prayer qualifies the oblation as "the living and reasonable oblation of our first fruit [*qurbānā hyā w-malyā d-Riḏatan*] and the unslain and acceptable sacrifice of the Son of our race..."<sup>79</sup> The prayer continues expressing the ecclesial and universal dimensions of the sacrifice of Christ, extended into history through the heroic witness of the children of the Church: The 'living and reasonable sacrifice' of the Son, which "the prophets in mystery portrayed, and the apostles openly proclaimed, and the martyrs with the blood of their necks bought, and the teachers in

the Churches expounded, and the priests upon the holy altar sacrificed and the Levites upon their arms bore, and the nations for the pardon of their debts received, for all creation to its utmost bound is offered to God, the Lord of all."<sup>80</sup>

The second G'hanta is a picturesque narration of salvation symptomatic if its all-encompassing value:

...for us men and for our salvation [*purqānan*], the only Begotten, God the Word, who is the likeness of God, counted it not robbery to be the equal of God, but emptied himself and took the likeness of a servant... by his hands, he fulfilled and perfected all this great and wonderful dispensation [*mdabbrānūtā*]... He is the fulfilment of all and all in him is fulfilled, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God and has sanctified us by the offering of his Body once and made peace by the Blood of his cross to things in heaven and to things on earth, through him, who was delivered for our sins and rose that we might be justified.<sup>81</sup>

The Institution Narrative, also makes mention of 'life' and restoration: "body which is broken for the 'life (*hayā*) of the world [Jn 6:51],' and for 'the remission of sins'; and the blood that is shed for many "for the remission of sins." Stressing its soteriological

<sup>77</sup> *Liturgy*, 111 (Syr); 69 (ET).

<sup>78</sup> *Liturgy*, 111 (Syr); 69 (ET).

<sup>79</sup> *Liturgy*, 115-116 (Syr); 72 (ET).

<sup>80</sup> *Liturgy*, 115-116 (Syr); 72 (ET). The same appears also in the Anaphora of Nestorius: 146-147 (Syr); 89 (ET).

<sup>81</sup> *Liturgy*, 124-125 (Syr); 77 (ET).



intent, the Institution Narrative concludes with the mention of salvation: "we may celebrate this great and awful and holy and divine mystery, wherein was great salvation [*purqānā rabbā*] of the whole race of mankind."<sup>82</sup>

The last G'hanta, which contains a lengthy intercessory prayer, is brimming with experience of salvation in Christ. Here follows a few examples to that:

We utter confession and praise before you in great thanksgiving for the great salvation [*purqānā rabbā*], which has been brought to us all through your beloved Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and we offer before your glorious Trinity ... this living and holy and acceptable sacrifice, the mystery of the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.<sup>83</sup>

Intermittent to the Anaphoral Intercession, the theme of Salvation is time and again referred to. After the general petitions with references to the unique God the Father, the salvation accomplished by Christ is confessed, employing East Syriac Christological terminology:

...He [the Son] for us men and for our salvation, the Son of God, God the Word, put on perfect man, our Lord Jesus Christ, and was perfected and justified in the power of God and that of the Holy Spirit. And he is

the mediator of God and men and "giver of life" [*yāhūbā d-hayē*] forever and ever to all those who through him are brought near to God the Father...<sup>84</sup>

The same soteriological aspect is permeated in the Epiclesis too. After the invocation of the Holy Spirit to 'come' upon the people and on the offerings to bless, consecrate and seal them the petition touches to its redemptive goal:

And whosoever in true faith eats of this bread and drinks of this cup, may they be to him, O my Lord, for the pardon of debts, and the remission of sins, and for the great hope of resurrection from the dead and for the salvation of his body and of his soul [*purqānā d-pagreh w-npšeh*] and for life and glory [*wl-hayē wl-tešbohtā*] for ever ad ever.<sup>85</sup>

So, the theme of life and salvation is made much more evident in the Anaphora of Theodore. The prayers of this anaphora emphasize that the liturgy is the place where the salvation is professed and lived in its fullness so that it may be communicated in this life and perfected in the world to come.

### 3.6. Life and Salvation in Anaphora of Nestorius

The anaphora attributed to Mar Nestorius,<sup>86</sup> is celebrated on the feasts of Epiphany, St John the Baptist, memorial of

<sup>82</sup> *Liturgy*, 125-126 (Syr); 78 (ET).

<sup>83</sup> *Liturgy*, 129 (Syr); 80 (ET).

<sup>84</sup> *Liturgy*, 133 (Syr); 82 (ET).

<sup>85</sup> *Liturgy*, 135 (Syr); 83 (ET).

<sup>86</sup> On the question of its origin, full text and commentary, see B.D. Spinks, *Mar Nestorius and Mar Theodore the Interpreter*, Cambridge 1999.

Greek doctors, Wednesday of the Rogation of the Ninevites and on Pesaha (Maundy Thursday). The overwhelming joy of being saved and expressions of abundant thanksgivings in this Anaphora are nothing but ample evidence of salvation experience.

The first G'hanta of the Anaphora of Nestorius begins with the theme of salvation, glorifying Christ as the "finder of the lost" and "gatherer of the dispersed".<sup>87</sup> The sacrifice of the Church as "living, holy and acceptable [*haytā w-qadištā w-mqablā*]" is a recurring phrase in the Ghantas.<sup>88</sup>

In the praise following the dialogue prayer, we find an experiential confession of the saving dispensation of Christ: "Be ye mindful of the wonderful dispensation of Christ our Saviour [*mdabbrānūteh tamihteh d-mšihā pāroqan*] which was perfected for us; who by his body gladdened our sadness and sprinkled upon our hearts his living blood..."<sup>89</sup>

In the kušapā that follows there are petitions of all embracing redemptive quality:

...I entreat and supplicate your grace that they may be for the tranquillity of the world and for the peace of the creation and for the existence of your faithful Church and for the success of your priests, and for the nurture of your faithful, and for the

preservation of your righteous, for the absolution and remission [*wl-hūsāyā wl-šubqānā*] of the sins of the penitent and for the conversion of the erring [*wl-punāyā d-th'yē*], for the salvation and aid [*purqānā w-'udrānā*] of all mankind and for the blotting of the offences [*wl-'thyānē*] of all your servants and handmaids who stand before you at this time...<sup>90</sup>

The Trinitarian dimension of salvation is recounted in the second G'hanta, where the role of Christ is underlined as the fullness of revelation and salvation: "...Lord our Saviour (*maran w-pāroqan*) Jesus Christ, our hope in whom are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge through whom we have received the knowledge of the Holy Spirit." The same prayer shows how creation leads to the salvation in the gratuitous divine dispensation of the Trinity:

...For you out of nothing, did bring us into being and did establish us, and when we had stumbled and fallen and worn out, you did renew us afresh (*menriš hadetan*) and raised us up and owned us and did not cease to exercise your care towards us; as far as heaven have you lifted us up and have given us by your compassion, the kingdom that is prepared...<sup>91</sup>

The third G'hanta is biblical and it is a brilliant description of the manifold aspects of life and salvation that the Son

<sup>87</sup> *Liturgy*, 141 (Syr); 86 (ET).

<sup>88</sup> *Liturgy*, 141 (Syr); 87, 88 (ET).

<sup>89</sup> *Liturgy*, 147 (Syr); 90 (ET).

<sup>90</sup> *Liturgy*, 147-148 (Syr); 90-91 (ET).

<sup>91</sup> *Liturgy*, 150-151 (Syr); 92 (ET).



accomplished for humanity, a trajectory of divine providence from the remission of sins to enlightenment to achieve inheritance of divine Sonship. Note the impressive use of a wealth of the terms of redemptive significance:

... for the salvation of all [*halap purqānā d-kōl*] [1Jn 2:2; 3:16] and was born of a woman, and was born under the law, (Gal 4:4) that 'he might ransom' [*nezban*] [Mt 20:28; Mk10:45; 1Tim 2:6; 1Pet 1:18] those that were under the law, and 'might quicken' [*thyt*] all those who were dead in Adam; and he slew sin by his flesh and abolished the law of ordinances by his commandments, and opened the eyes of our understanding which were blind and prepared for us 'a way of salvation' [*urhā d-purqānan*] and enlightened with the light of the divine knowledge, and to those who accepted him he gave power to become sons of God (through baptism) ...

And he loved his own which were in this world, even unto the end he loved them [Jn 13:1]. 'He became the ransom [*ezdbanan*] of the guilt of our race for the life of all (*halp hayē d-kōl*) 'and gave himself up' [*w-yahab hwā npšē*] for all to death which was reigning over us and to whose power we were subdued, for through our sin we were sold to it. And by his precious blood 'he ransomed and saved us' (*zban w-parqan*) and descended into Sheol and loosened the bonds of death ... He 'the first

fruit of our salvation' [*rištā d-purqānan*] [1Cor 15:20] rose up on the third day and became the first fruit of those that slept that he might be pre-eminently among all. He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of your majesty, O, God and left us 'the remembrance of our salvation,' [*uhdānā d-purqānan*] this mystery which we offer before you...

When the time approached in which he had to endure the passion and draw near death, in the night he was delivered 'for the life of the world' [*halap hyāwe d-'lmā*]... he instituted his own Passover before he died, even this which we do for his remembrance as he entrusted it unto us until he be revealed from heaven...<sup>92</sup>

The Institution Narrative refers to Christ who was "slain for us" [*etnakes makāpyn*], and the bread that is "broken for you for the remission of sins," and the blood shed for many for the remission of sins. Pointing to the salvific dimension of the Narrative, there is added an anticipatory reference to "resurrection (*l-qyāmtā*), and new life (*l-hayē hdātā*)," <sup>93</sup> which is to appear in the epiclesis as well.

The *kūšāpa* following the doxology, reflects pleas unfolding further aspects of salvation: such as to "lift me up [*asaqyne*] from the abyss of sins," to heal (*asā*) the wounds of evil deeds by "your all-healing medicine" (*bsmāk m'sā kōl*), and for

<sup>92</sup> *Liturgy*, 156-158 (Syr); 95-97 (ET).

<sup>93</sup> *Liturgy*, 160 (Syr); 97 (ET).

remission of sins (*šubqānā d-hthāhē*), pardon of debts (*husāyā d-hwbē*), blotting out of blemish (*thyānā d-mwmē*), for the celebrant and his companions.<sup>94</sup>

The next G'hanta, which is intercession, at the outset, takes up the theme of salvation: "We also Lord mighty Father commemorating 'this salvation given for our sake' (*l-purqānā hānā d-halāpy*) and for all things which have been done for us before all do believe and confess you...<sup>95</sup> It goes on to point out the "wonderful dispensation" (*mdabbranūteh tmehtā*) of Christ.<sup>96</sup> Just as the sacrifice of Christ was for the salvation of many, the petitions as well, maintain all-embracing character to the extent to include in it, "all our enemies and those who hate us and for all those who devise evil against us, not for judgement and for vengeance... but for 'mercies, salvation and remission of sins'" (*lrahmē wl-purqānā wl-šubqānā d-hthāhē*).<sup>97</sup>

The alternative kušapā that follows again beseeches for material and spiritual benefits leading to life and salvation. "... And to your people assembled in your name and at this time standing before you, pardon their debts and blot out their evil deeds; cleanse their blemishes and forgive their sins; heal their pains, make them whole from their diseases; overthrow their enemies ... pass over their offences and clear away their stains,

wash their wounds ... turn back their wanderings; quicken their mortality ... calm their troubles and enlighten their darkness; exalt their lowliness..."<sup>98</sup>

The fifth G'hanta leading to epiclesis sums up all petitions, with eschatological overtone:

Grant to us, O my Lord, that in sincerity and of love and purity of thought we may live before you in this our place of sojourn, possessing a steadfast knowledge of true faith in you and having communion in your awful, holy and divine mysteries, so that when we stand before the awful judgement seat of your majesty we may not be ashamed and found guilty. And as in this world you have made us worthy of the ministry of your awful and holy and divine mysteries, so also in the world to come make us worthy with openness of face to be partakers of all those blessings that neither pass nor waste away.<sup>99</sup>

### 3.6.1. The Epiclesis and Experience of Salvation

The epiclesis, where the indwelling of the Holy Spirit takes place to "change and consecrate" the gifts, makes the ultimate supplication in the Anaphora for communion, eternal life and salvation:

...and do you change and consecrate them by the operation of the Holy Spirit in such wise that the taking of these glorious

<sup>94</sup> *Liturgy*, 162 (Syr); 99 (ET).

<sup>95</sup> *Liturgy*, 164 (Syr); 99 (ET).

<sup>96</sup> *Liturgy*, 164 (Syr); 100 (ET).

<sup>97</sup> *Liturgy*, 169 (Syr); 102 (ET).

<sup>98</sup> *Liturgy*, 173-174 (Syr); 105 (ET).

<sup>99</sup> *Liturgy*, 177-178 (Syr); 107 (ET).



and holy mysteries, may be to all those who receive them, unto eternal life [*l-hayē dl-'lam*] and resurrection from the dead and absolution of the body and of the soul, and unto the light of knowledge and to openness of face before you and unto the eternal salvation [*wl-purqānā dl-'lam*], which you have promised us through our lord Jesus Christ, that we may all cleave together in one accord, in one bond of love and of peace that we may be in one bond and one spirit as we called in the one hope of our calling.<sup>100</sup>

The Anaphora of Nestorius is much more eloquent to mention the redemptive dimensions of the Eucharist with a wide range of expressions leading to a rich experience of being saved in the present life and to look forward in hope and unity in the eternal kingdom where the salvation, finds its consummation.

### 3.7. The Fraction

Coming to the common part of the celebration, the extensive incense prayer before fraction presents a sense of reconciliation, conversion, absolution, and new life:

May our prayer and our request be pleasant unto you, O our Lord and our God, and may the flavour of our pleasant censor be for your rest, even as the censor of Aaron, the priest in the tabernacle. Renew [*hadet*] our soul together with our bodies and be

reconciled (*etr'ā*) to your creation, because of your manifold mercies...<sup>101</sup>

The prayer that follows also carries on the theme of forgiveness and reparation. The reference to the Good shepherd who finds us and ensures our return to the fold and the petitions to sweeten, wash, pardon, all reflects newness of life and salvation:

Sweeten our Lord and our God, the odour of our uncleanness and of our corruption, with the fragrant smell of the sweetness of your love and wash us therewith from the stains of sin O Good Shepherd, who started forth in search and did find us in our lost condition and willed our return. Pardon me my debts and sins, those, which I know, and those, which I know not, in your grace and in your mercies.<sup>102</sup>

The prayer, holding the host before fraction, concentrates on the sole point of salvation.

For (you are) the living and life-giving bread [*lahmā gēr hayā w-mahyāna*], which came down from heaven and gives life [*hayē*] to the whole world; for they who eat it will die not and those who receive it are saved and absolved [*metparqēn w-methsyēn*] by it and live by it forever.<sup>103</sup>

Vividly expressing the redemptive dimension of Eucharist, the prayers of the signing of the bread and cup, term them as

<sup>100</sup> *Liturgy*, 179-180 (Syr); 108 (ET).

<sup>101</sup> *Liturgy*, 69-70 (Syr); 43 (ET).

<sup>102</sup> *Liturgy*, 70-71 (Syr); 44 (ET).

<sup>103</sup> *Liturgy*, 72 (Syr); 45 (ET).

the “life-giving body” [*pagrā mahyānā*] and the “absolving blood” (*dmā mahasyānā*).<sup>104</sup> The formula while joining the halves of the bread again spells out the salvific dimension of the Eucharist: “These holy, life-giving and divine mysteries (*arāzē šbiḥē w-qaddiṣē w-mhyānē*) have been set apart and consecrated and fulfilled, united and commemorated...that they may be to us O my Lord, for the pardon of debts and for the forgiveness of sins and for the great hope of resurrection....”<sup>105</sup> At the end of the Fraction, while loosening the *šōṣapā* also there is mention of making the minister worthy of “pardon of debts and forgiveness of sins.”<sup>106</sup>

In the section of reconciliation, spiritually preparing the people for communion, the *kārōzūtā* of the deacon mentions the knowledge of ‘life’ (*hayē*) that Christ gained for us “through his life-giving laws” (*b-namōsāwe mhyānē*) and holy commands and, it describes the Eucharist as “the gift of eternal life, (*mwhbtā d-hayē d-l’lam*), “ expressing its redemptive significance.<sup>107</sup>

The response of the *Kārōzūta* repeated five times, beginning with the negative aspects of reconciliation, “pardon the sins and offences of your servants” goes on to conclude with its positive and redemptive

dimension: “That they may be to us O, our Lord for the resurrection of our bodies and for the ‘salvation of our souls’” (*purqānan dnpšātan*).<sup>108</sup>

The simultaneous priestly *kūṣāpā* during *Kārōzūtā* is a perfect portrayal of the salvation brought about by Jesus Christ in a believer, which seeks its fulfilment in radiant life in heaven.

You have delivered us (*p’ṣitan*) from the power of darkness and has bidden us to the kingdom of your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom you have unbound and destroyed the power of death; and has given us eternal life: (*hayē dl-‘lam*), which will not be destroyed and now you have made us worthy to stand before your pure and holy altar and to offer unto you this ‘life-giving holy and bloodless sacrifice’ (*haytā w-qadiṣta w-dlā d’mā*) ... Let not this be for our judgement or for our retribution, but be it for mercy and for remission of sins and for resurrection from the dead and “life everlasting” (*wl-hayē dl-‘lam*). May we all be those who fulfil your praises and a holy tabernacle and pure abode for your dwelling. When we have partaken the body and blood of Christ, may we shine with all your saints in the great and glorious resurrection.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>104</sup> *Liturgy*, 75 (Syr); 47 (ET).

<sup>105</sup> *Liturgy*, 76-77 (Syr); 47 (ET).

<sup>106</sup> *Liturgy*, 78 (Syr); 49 (ET).

<sup>107</sup> *Liturgy*, 80-81 (Syr); 50 (ET).

<sup>108</sup> *Liturgy*, 84 (Syr); 51-52 (ET).

<sup>109</sup> *Liturgy*, 82-83 (Syr); 51 (ET).



### 3.8. Communion Rites

The formula of communion also bears soteriological allusion, leading to a final experience of it in heaven. During the handing over of Chalice to the deacon, the priest says: "The grace of the Holy Spirit be with you and with us and with the partakers here of the kingdom of heaven for ever."<sup>110</sup> Almost all prayers of communion refer to the participation in the 'life,' i.e., "eternal life" in heaven. Deacon's proclamation after the *Sanctum Sanctis* is so: "Praise you the Living God (*l-alahā hayā*)."<sup>111</sup>

The communion of the clergy is noteworthy in the original East Syriac tradition, which never permits the priest to take the host by himself, rather it is received from other priest, signifying the "receiving aspect" of communion. Liturgical commentaries explain as an expression, that salvation is always mediated.<sup>112</sup> Priest's prayer during communion shows that receiving communion is equivalent to receiving salvation: "Sanctify our bodies by your body, pardon our debts by your precious blood, purge our consciences by the hyssop of your compassion, O Christ the hope of our nature Lord of all, Father Son and the Holy Spirit."<sup>113</sup> The prayer on receiving the

chalice refers to the participation in the feast of heavenly bridegroom: "For the guests at your banquet, heavenly bridegroom, you have prepared the chalice of your precious blood."<sup>114</sup>

Consonant with it, the priest's invitation for communion follows: "The gift of the grace of our Giver of Life (*mahyanan*) our Lord Jesus Christ be fulfilled in his mercies with us all."<sup>115</sup> The theme 'pardon of sin' and 'life' recurs in the communion formula:

The body of our Lord to the devout priest / to the deacon of God / to the pious believer for the "pardon of debts" ... The precious blood for the "pardon of debts, (*hūsāyā d-hūbē*) a "spiritual feast unto eternal life," to the devout priest/ deacon of God and so to everyone according to his degree.<sup>116</sup>

### 3.9. Thanksgiving Rites

The prayers in the thanksgiving section express the deep gratitude for the life and salvation already attained through Holy Communion and the longing for an experience of its fullness in heaven. The hymn of praise attributed to St. Ephrem mentions the promise of "the new life in the kingdom on high (*hayā hadtē bmarkut*

<sup>110</sup> *Liturgy*, 90 (Syr); 55 (ET).

<sup>111</sup> *Liturgy*, 90 (Syr); 56 (ET).

<sup>112</sup> On the whole question, see R.F. Taft, "Receiving Communion – A Forgotten Symbol," in id., *Beyond East and West*, Rome 1997, 133-142.

<sup>113</sup> *Liturgy*, 106 (Syr); 65 (ET).

<sup>114</sup> *Raza*, 61.

<sup>115</sup> *Liturgy*, 92 (Syr); 57 (ET).

<sup>116</sup> *Liturgy*, 92-93 (Syr); 57 (ET).

...*rwāmā*)” and expresses the yearning for it in his glorious coming: “... That in the day of your shining forth we may live before you; and may go forth to meet you according to your will...”<sup>117</sup>

The salvific and eschatological dimension of the Eucharist together with its effects of witnessing to Christ in daily lives are best articulated in the prayer attributed to Yezdhin the Great, designated for the feasts of the Lord:

Strengthen our Lord the hands that have been stretched out and have received the holy Eucharist for the pardon of debts,  
 - The mouths which sung halleluiah within the holy place,  
 - The ears which have heard the voice of your praises,  
 - The eyes that have seen your great compassion again O Lord!  
 - The tongues also that have cried holy  
 - The feet that have walked within the churches,  
 - The bodies that have eaten ‘your living body’ (*pagrāk hayā*),

→ Make them worthy to yield fruits to your Godhead

→ You make them fit to sing your glory  
 → Let them not my Lord, hear the voice of alarm

→ Let them see your blessed hope  
 → You make them to speak the truth  
 → Make them walk in the land of light

→ Do you revive them “with new life” (*hayā hadtā*) ...<sup>118</sup>

The atonement and future hope attained through the reception of the Eucharist is replicated in the thanksgiving for ordinary days as well: “... By your body and your blood you have pardoned and forgiven the stains and debts of all who have believed in you and make us all worthy at your revelation to go forth with confidence to meet you and with the ranks of the heavenly beings, may we be lifted up in glory, Amen.”

In a similar vein the deacon’s invitation for thanksgiving also qualifies the Eucharist as “glorious, life-giving and divine” (*šabihe*

*w-qadišē w-mahyānē*) mysteries.<sup>119</sup> Reminiscent of epicletic petitions, the second priestly prayer again stresses on salvation, new life and future hope attained through the communion:

May Christ our Lord and our God and our King and our “Saviour and our Giver of Life” (*pārōkan w-mahyānan*) and Forgiver of our sins who in his grace and mercies has made us worthy to take his precious and all-sanctifying body and blood ... And may this pledge (*rahbōnā*) O my Lord which we have received and are receiving be to us for the pardon of debts and the forgiveness of sins

<sup>117</sup> *Liturgy*, 93 (Syr); 58 (ET).

<sup>118</sup> *Liturgy*, 94-95 (Syr); 59 (ET).

<sup>119</sup> *Liturgy*, 96 (Syr); 60 (ET).



and for the great hope of resurrection from the dead and for a "new life" (*hayē hadatē*) in the kingdom of heaven with all those who have well pleased you...<sup>120</sup>

The priestly prayers for ordinary days also present the same theme of pardon of debts, forgiveness of sins, and the points to the efficacy of the Eucharist as the "glorious, life-giving and divine (*šabihe w-qadišē w-mahyānē*) mysteries."<sup>121</sup>

### 3.10. Final Blessing (*Hutamma*)

The final blessing formulae adeptly sum up the redemptive dimension of the celebration of the Eucharist. On Sundays, Feast and memorial days, the Blessing Prayer emphasises salvific aspects of Eucharist citing from gospel of John (cf. 5:24; 6:50-59): "Truly, truly, I say to you, who eat my flesh remain in me and I in him, and I will raise him up in the last day, and he comes not in the judgment but has passed from judgement to life."<sup>122</sup> Referring to the conventional terms alluding to salvation, the prayer concludes with an invocation to bless the congregation, which has "rejoiced in the power of the 'glorious, holy, life-giving and divine mysteries (*šabihe w-qadišē w-mahyānē w-alāhyē*).'"<sup>123</sup>

The two Huthamas of ordinary days also underscore the redemptive aspects of the Eucharist; both of them are christological,

illustrating pardon, salvation and eternal life in the kingdom of heaven. The first one emphasises on the heavenly glory received from Eucharist: "By his glorious, holy, life-giving and divine mysteries (*šabihe w-qadišē w-mahyānē w-alāhyē*) make us worthy of a fair glory of his kingdom and of delight with his holy angels, and of 'openness of face (*galiūt apē*)' before him and of standing at his right hand in Jerusalem which is above in his graces and mercies."<sup>124</sup>

The alternative Huthama is more articulate on the absolution and liberation and continuing protection of God in daily lives: "To him who 'absolved us of our debts' (*hasy hwban*) by his body and blotted out our sins 'tā lhathahēn) by his blood, let there be glory in his Church ... May our Lord and our God liberate you from evil (*npasykon m bišā*) one and his hosts... May you be sealed and guarded from all adversities hidden and open, now and always for ever and ever."<sup>125</sup>

### 4. Conclusions

(1) The foregoing study leads us to the truth that life or salvation is the prime theme of the celebration of the Eucharist as the Eucharistic prayers demonstrate. Within this broad framework, the East Syriac Eucharistic prayers are eloquent witness to the aspect of life and salvation. Whereas the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari lays out the dimension of salvation as an

<sup>120</sup> *Liturgy*, 98 (Syr); 61 (ET).

<sup>121</sup> *Liturgy*, 102 (Syr); 63 (ET).

<sup>122</sup> *Liturgy*, 103 (Syr); 64 (ET).

<sup>123</sup> *Liturgy*, 103 (Syr); 64 (ET).

<sup>124</sup> *Liturgy*, 104 (Syr); 64-65 (ET).

<sup>125</sup> *Liturgy*, 105 (Syr); 65 (ET).

effect of the whole dispensation of Christ, the Anaphora of Theodore and Nestorius are much more articulate on the redemptive dimension of the Eucharist, as a wide variety of terms associated with life and salvation testifies.

(2) The theme of salvation is not a romantic idea attributed to the liturgy from outside; rather, it is relived, expressed, and celebrated as the very liturgical texts show, on which, we relied predominantly our study. Why salvation is the mainstay in the liturgy? The progress of the liturgical celebration demonstrates that it is a ritual re-enactment of the very salvific actions of Christ. The celebration of the Eucharist from the very outset is Christ-actions, and therefore, we find the reference to life and salvation not confined to the anaphora only, but to the whole of the liturgy, right from the very beginning till the final blessing. Whether in the Enarxis or in the Liturgy of the Word or communion rite the saving action of Christ is expressed through a wide range of terms associated with salvation. However, one finds a progression in the experience of salvation, that it is much more articulated in the communion rites, towards which the entire rite is oriented.

(3) The wide range of terms associated with life and salvation is a matter to which calls for our further attention. The synonymous term *hayā* means both life and Salvation, is presented as a divine initiative of the trinity, towards which man's response is called for. Life and salvation is mentioned, beseeched and hope for in the prayers designated to priests, deacons and to the

faithful. These liturgical prayers show that salvation is divine initiative at work through a process of conversion, purification, leading to life in Christ and eternal life in heaven, demonstrating its eschatological dimension as well. On the one hand, terms like forgiveness of sins, pardon of debts, blotting out of stains, liberation, buying as ransom and deliverance present the process of purification and restoration that takes place in the act of salvation. Positively, on the other hand, it brings hope of resurrection, joy and happiness in the present life and eternal bliss in the kingdom of heaven, where one sees God with "open face" in the company of saints. These two dimensions of salvation are reiterated in the liturgical prayers.

(4) The importance accorded to life and salvation in the liturgy, answers to the perennial questions of mankind that makes liturgy ever relevant. Man who is under burden of sins and sorts of imperfections and afflictions is always in need of bodily as well as spiritual restoration and new life. Christ, the saviour of mankind, through his sacrifice has opened the door to salvation and life, and the liturgy of the Eucharist carries on the same redemptive action of Christ, and it is offered to each participant. In the modern world, beset with ever-growing problems and anguishes, man at times looks for new models of worships and even confessions, which promise liberation and bliss, unaware of the spiritual treasures he already has possessed. The East Syriac Eucharistic liturgy calls every Christian, especially members of its own tradition, to unearth the great treasure of life and salvation articulated, celebrated and lived in its liturgy.





# Integrity of the Sacraments of Initiation

Prof. John Moolan

## Introduction

Apparently, up to the fourth century, the whole Christendom kept up the integrity of the sacraments of initiation intact. Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist, integrally given as the sacraments of gateway or door to the Church (AG 7), serve the purpose of holistic growth of the baptised to make them perfectly worthy for their heavenward journey. The fourth century, due to the independence of the Church, witnessed an increased number of conversions, which made bishops difficult to reach different places of initiation on the same day. Hence, there were only two options before the Church, either reserve to bishops alone the administration of chrismation or delegate the whole rite to priests also. The west opted for the bishop as the ordinary minister of chrismation postponing it to a later period at the convenience of the bishop, which affected

the integrity of the rite among them. Whereas the east opted, priest also for administering chrismation and kept up the integrity of the initiation rite intact.

In the west, the separation was a gradual process. By the fifth century, the development of the theology of confirmation paved the way for the disappearance of the word chrismation from the west. The term confirmation used first liturgically in canon 3 of the council of Riez (439), and the council of Orange (441), canon 2, repeated the same.<sup>1</sup> It meant for the final intervention of the bishop to confirm the neophytes in faith and grace received in baptism. Around 460 on Whitsunday (the Sunday following Easter) Faustus of Riez in Gaul preached first on the relevance of confirmation as a distinct sacrament. His teaching later became the basis for the doctrine of confirmation in the west. He distinguished theologically baptism and confirmation in the following way:

<i>Baptism</i>	<i>Confirmation</i>
1. Innocence completed	1. Grace completed
2. Regeneration declared	2. Combat declared
3. Purity obtained	3. Strength obtained

<sup>1</sup> Mansi, J., ed., *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, Vols 5, 6 (Florence-Paris, 1904, 1905) 1092, 432.

Thus by the eleventh century, the whole west seemed to have lost the integrity of initiation rite separating confirmation from baptism. Even then they continued serving Eucharist together with baptism. Thus, the traditional order of initiation rite as baptism-chrismation-Eucharist differed in the west as baptism-Eucharist, and later confirmation. This problem never occurred in the east, since priests could administer chrismation together with baptism and Eucharist.

The idea of separating Eucharist also from baptism happened in the thirteenth century. The Council of Lateran IV (1215) stressed the need of confession before the reception of the Eucharist,<sup>2</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1275) endorsed the suggestion of the council, and the Council of Trent (1546) completed the separation of Eucharist from the initiation. Thus, the serving of the Eucharist with baptism also disappeared in the west. As a result, the sacraments of initiation lost its complete integrity, and started to administer them separately. For them the law is that the baptism for infants within the first few weeks of birth, Holy Communion for children at the age of knowledge, and confirmation at the age of discretion (CIC 867, 883, 891, 913).

Oriental never lost the integrity of the initiation rite.<sup>3</sup> They keep up the strict link between the sacraments of initiation due to the great role of these sacraments in spiritual

growth as, new creation, new strengthening, and new vivification of the members in the Church (CCEO 686, 692, 696, 710). The spiritually born in baptism need an immediate conferring of chrismation and Eucharist for strengthening them in the gifts of the Spirit and nourishing them with the spiritual food to make them the full members of the Church.<sup>4</sup>

### Integrity

The integrity of the sacraments of initiation effects into the incorporation of Christians to Christ's baptism, His paschal mysteries, and His mystical body.

#### a. Christ's baptism

Christian initiation incorporates Christians to the baptism of Christ in Jordan where the Father and the Holy Spirit manifested their integrity with the Son. Father proclaimed His belovedness to the son through His declaration, "You are my beloved Son." The Holy Spirit established His indebtedness to the Son through His indwelling on the Son in the form of dove (Mt 3:16-17). Thus, both of them approved the Son's divine status of attachment to them and made it public to the whole world.

Likewise, baptism declares the recipients' belovedness to the Father, chrismation manifests their indebtedness to the Spirit, and the Eucharist proclaims their

<sup>2</sup> See also J.Raya, *Theophany and Sacraments of Initiation* (Ontario, 1993) 118.

<sup>3</sup> Though the Syro-Malabar Church lost this integrity with the Diamper synod in 1599, the restoration took place in 2005 with a new text, *The Sacraments of the Syro-Malabar Church* (Cochin: Kakkanad, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> *Instructions for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, Oriental Congregation (Rome, 1996) 38-52.



unity to the Son. Hence these sacraments unite intimately the recipients with the Holy Trinity providing full freedom of the children of God by liberating them from the slavery of Satan (Rom 6: 17-18), and raising them to the status of saints (Rom 1: 7; 1Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1, Phil 1:1; Col 1:02) in order to live for Christ (Gal 2:20).

### **b. Paschal Mysteries**

The initiation rite incorporates the recipients to the paschal mysteries of death, resurrection, ascension, Pentecost, and Eucharist.

Incorporation into the mysteries of death and resurrection takes place through baptism. Baptismal immersion signifies death to sin (Rom 6:2-4), and emersion implies resurrection to life (Rom 6:4). As a result, a new creation takes place where the recipients become the children of God and the heirs of heaven.

Incorporation into the mysteries of ascension and Pentecost takes place through Chrismation. The risen Lord conferred His Holy Spirit to the apostles twice in relation with His ascension and Pentecost. The first conferring of the Holy Spirit took place in private just after His private ascension to the Father. At the early morning of the Resurrection day, Jesus requested Mary Magdalene not to touch Him, since He had not yet ascended to the Father (Jn 20:16-17). Whereas in the evening of the same day, He showed the apostles His hands and His side as if they were permitted to touch Him before He breathed Holy Spirit on them for their new beginning (Jn 20:19-22). This

indicates towards His private ascension to the Father in between these two events.

Second conferring of the Holy Spirit took place in public on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), ten days after His public ascension to the Father, to strengthen them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Lk 24:50-51). This private and public conferring of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, following His respective private and public ascensions, is almost similar to the first conferring of the Holy Spirit in baptism for a new birth, and the second conferring of the Spirit in Chrismation for a new strength. Thus, through baptism and Chrismation, the Christians take participation in the mysteries of ascension and Pentecost becoming perfect to work for the kingdom of God.

The incorporation into the mystery of the Eucharist takes place through the Holy Communion. Eucharist unites the recipients to the mystical body of Christ, and makes them the perfect members of the Church. It destroys sins, increases grace, makes holy, provides immortality, and deepens faith to enter into the life of Christ. This spiritual nourishment enables the recipients to run a good race to obtain the awaiting crown of justice in heaven (2 Tim 4:7-8; Heb 12:1).

### **c. Mystical body**

The sacraments of initiation as one unit give full entry to the Church, the mystical body of Christ. Their intrinsic link manifests the recipients' perfect membership in the Church. Just as the natural care provides natural growth to the natural body, the human race, so also the Spiritual care provides

spiritual growth to the Spiritual body, the mystical body of Christ (CCEO 695, 697). Therefore, Tertullian (+220) says, “Body is washed that the soul be immaculate; body is anointed that the soul be consecrated; body is signed that the soul be fortified; body is overshadowed with the laying on of hands that the soul be illumined; and body is nourished with the body and blood of Christ that God enlivens the soul.”<sup>5</sup>

Just as the natural needs like existence (birth), resistance (protection), and nourishment (food) are the immediate requisites for a physically newborn child, so also spiritual needs like spiritual existence

(baptism), resistance (chrismation) and nourishment (Eucharist) are the immediate requisites for a spiritually newborn child. In physical birth, when the newborn cries for protection against natural restraints of the body, the nature provides an immediate resistance power (immunity) and nourishment (breast milk) for its better ongoing process. Like manner, in baptismal spiritual birth, the newborn is immediately protected from spiritual restraints through chrismation (immunity) and Eucharist (nourishment) for its better spiritual ongoing process. Thus the baptism regenerates, chrismation fortifies, and Eucharist nourishes the mystical body of Christ:

<i>Baptismal Regeneration</i>	<i>Chrismatic Fortification</i>	<i>Eucharistic Nourishment</i>
Absolves sins	Confers perfection	Provides sustenance
Gives birth	Gives strength	Gives life
Induces grace	Perfects grace	Increases grace

First Century

The apostles were privately initiated into the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of resurrection itself at the evening when Jesus breathed on them saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit; if you forgive the sins of any, they will be forgiven, if you retain the sins of any, they will be retained” (Jn 19:22-23). Their public initiation took place on the day of Pentecost making them perfect in the gifts of the Holy Spirit in order to continue the

works of Christ on earth illumining others to the divine realities through Christian initiation.

1. Baptism in the Name of Jesus

Apostolic ministry of baptism in the name of Jesus indicates the acceptance of the superiority of Christ as the only Lord and saviour of the world over everything (Acts 4:12). It stamped the holy name of Jesus on the forehead enabling the baptised to see Jesus face to face (Rev 22:4). Accordingly, Peter in Jerusalem (Acts 2:38) and Cornelius’

<sup>5</sup> De Resurrectione 8, P.L. 2, 852; CCL 2, 913.



house (Acts 10:48) asked people to receive baptism in the name of Jesus. Paul at Ephesus baptised John the Baptist's disciples in the name of Jesus (Acts 19:5).

## 2. Order of Initiation

Among the apostles, we find such two orders of initiation process as, chrismation-baptism and baptism-chrismation.

### a. Chrismation-Baptism

In this order, the Spirit comes first and then follows baptism. Through the listening of the word of God, the Spirit comes upon the listeners and then they are baptised. This indicates the necessity of baptism for those who have received the Spirit. It happened at the first preaching of Peter in Jerusalem. His preaching cut the hearts of the listeners to fill them with the Spirit, and then they were asked to receive baptism in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:37-42). In another occasion while Peter was preaching in Cornelius house, the Holy Spirit fell on those who heard him, and they started talking in tongues. Then Peter asked them to receive baptism in the name of Jesus (Acts 10:44-48).

We see here the same sequence of events that took place at the Pentecost, i.e. the Spirit came first and then followed other things. The sequence of three witnesses such as the Spirit, water, and blood (1 Jn 5:8) are set in motion in this order. This means that the witness of God is greater than that of the people.

### b. Baptism-Chrismation

In this order comes first baptism, and then follows the conferring of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands. Paul in Ephesus baptised first the twelve disciples of John the Baptist, and then he conferred the Holy Spirit to them through the laying on of hands (Acts 19:1-7). Philip the deacon baptised many people in Samaria, but since he could not confer the Holy Spirit to them, Peter and John hurried from Jerusalem and conferred the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands (Acts 8:12-17). We see here the same sequence of events that took place at the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, where the Holy Spirit descended on Him only after His baptism (Lk 3:21-22). The whole Christendom follows this sequence today.

## Observations

From these two traditions the first one is considered as the most ancient one, because it follows the Resurrection-Pentecost order where the Spirit was given first and then followed other things. Anyhow, certain such elements as anointing (sealing), immersion, and Eucharist are found missing here mentioned.

### 1. Anointing

There is no mentioning of anointing, perhaps the apostolic age stressed much on the laying on of hands rather than the anointing.<sup>6</sup> However, there are many Gospel references for the anointing, e.g. Jesus the anointed One of God (Lk 4:18; Acts 4: 27;

<sup>6</sup> L.L.Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing* (London, 1966) 15-29.

10:38), the anointing of Jesus' feet (Lk 7:38; Jn 12:3) and head (Mt 26:71; Mk 14:3), the traditional anointing of guests (Lk 7:46), anointing of the sick (Mk 6:13; Jm 5:15) and the dead (Mk 16:1; Jn 19:39-40). Hence at this stage, as John and Paul say, Christians might have considered as the anointed (1 Jn 2:20, 27) and sealed ones with Christ (2 Cor 1:22) and Spirit (Eph 1:13, 4:30; Rev 9:4) through the power of the divine word (2 Tm 2:19).

Possible influence of Jewish tradition of anointing at Christian initiation can also not be discarded though not mentioned at this stage. Divine stipulation for making special ointment for anointing (Ex 30:22-33), kingly (1Sam 10:1, 16: 13; 1Kings 1:39; 2 Kings 9:6; 11:12), priestly (Ex 28:41; 29:1-7; Lev 8:12; Num 3:3-4), and prophetic (1 Kings 19:16; 1 Chronicles 16:22; Psalm 105:15) anointing, and the anointing at proselyte and Essene initiations, might have influenced also the early Christian initiation process.<sup>7</sup>

## 2. Immersion

No mention of immersion, perhaps due to its common practice everywhere, there might have been no need of any special reference to it.

## 3. Eucharist

No mention of Holy Communion to the newly baptised, since it was unavailable everywhere due to the absence of daily *Qurbana* and the preservation of the Eucharist during this period. Even the public celebration of the Eucharist was unheard at this stage due to persecutions. Hence, the initiation took place at any time in any place of available convenience. Anyhow, the Eucharist was the centre of Christian life, because it was celebrated privately on every Sunday (Lord's Day), and the baptised alone were permitted to partake of it.

## Second Century

### 1. Didache (50-150)<sup>8</sup>

Didache ("Teaching of the Lord from the Twelve Apostles to the Nations") is the very first documented evidence found for the formal initiation rite in the early Church. In general, the document has two parts with fifteen chapters and a conclusion as follows.

Section I: Chs. 1-6 Moral instructions on the two ways – the way of life and the way of death.

Section II: Chs. 7-15 Church discipline on liturgical matters and eschatology (conclusion)

<sup>7</sup> Jones C., Wainwright G., Yarnold E., eds., *The Study of Liturgy* (London, 1979) 46.

<sup>8</sup> For the traditional grouping of this document in the second century, see J.P.Lewis, "Baptismal Practices of the Second- and Third- Century Church", *Restoration Quarterly* 26 (1983) 1-17. General consensus today shows that it comes from Syria and dates from late first to the early second century, see E.C.Whitaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* (London, 2003) 1-2; J.P.Audet, *La Didache: Instructions aux apôtres* (Paris, 1958); A.Vööbus, *Liturgical Traditions in the Didache* (Stockholm, 1968); W.Rordorf, A. Tuillier, *La Doctrine des douze apôtres*, sc 248 (Paris, 1978).



Chs.7 Baptism

Ch.8 Fasting and Prayer

Ch.9-10 Eucharistic prayer

Chs.11-13 Ministries of the Apostles and the Prophets

Ch.14 Sunday Eucharist

Ch.15 Status of Bishops and Deacons

Conclusion: Eschatology

The whole document presupposes adult initiation in three such stages as preparation, baptism, and Eucharist.<sup>9</sup>

### a. Preparation

Candidates prepare for baptism through fasting and prayer (ch.8). As an expression of repentance, they fast one or two days before baptism, while the celebrant and congregation fast for a brief time.

### b. Baptism

Baptism of immersion in the name of the Holy Trinity takes place in living (running or moving) or collected water of cold or warm with some witnesses present (ch.7.1-4). The effusion (pouring of water) takes place only in the absence of enough water

for immersion, and there is no mention of aspersion (sprinkling).

Though the texts give no indication to the minister of baptism, the trainer of candidates like the apostles (missionaries?), prophets, teachers, bishops, and deacons as leaders of the community might have done it (ch.11-13).<sup>10</sup> According to Ignatius of Antioch (d.ca.107), "it is not permitted without authorization from the bishop either to baptise or to hold an *Agape*."<sup>11</sup> This means that everything should be under the control of bishop.

Baptism followed a period of moral instruction on "Two Ways" of life and death based on Jewish moral teachings supplemented by New Testament teachings of Jesus (ch.1-6).<sup>12</sup> Thus, the candidates commit themselves to the Christian manner of life.

### c. Eucharist

The sending out of the non-baptised before the Eucharist of the faithful and the invitation of the baptised to take part in the Eucharist (ch.9.5; 10.6) manifest the link between baptism and Eucharist. This shows that the baptism is not only an adhesion to

<sup>9</sup> A.Benoit, *Le baptême Chrétien au second siècle* (Paris, 1953) 5-33; J.A.Draper, ed., *The Didache in Modern Research* (Leiden, 1995); C.N.Jefford (ed.), *The Didache in Context: Essays on its Text, History, and Transmission* (Leiden, 1995); H.van de Sandt, D.Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Minneapolis, 2002).

<sup>10</sup> A.Milavec, *The Didache: Faith, Hope, & Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50-70 C.E.* (New York, 2003) 76, 268, 275; E.Ferguson, "Baptism from the Second to the Fourth Century," *Restoration Quarterly* 1 (1957) 202.

<sup>11</sup> *Smyrn.* 8.2; see J.Quasten, *Patrology* 1 (Utrecht, 1966) 68; M.H.Shepherd, "Smyrna in the Ignatian Letteres. A Study in the Church Order," *Journal of Religion* 20 (1940) 141-159.

<sup>12</sup> W.Rordorf, "Un chapitre d'éthique Judéo-chrétienne: Les Deux voies," *Recherches de sciences religieuses* 60 (1972) 109-128.

Jesus, the Lord and Saviour, but also an admission to the community of the faithful as His followers. In *Didache* the membership in the Church and commitment for a good life are the two principal points of significance to the baptised.

## 2. Epistle of Barnabas (before 132)<sup>13</sup>

Even though, the name Barnabas does not occur in the text, a subscript attributed to him as the *Epistle of Barnabas* indicates that the work may be anonymous and wrongly ascribed to a Pseudo Barnabas, not Barnabas the companion of Paul (Acts 4:36), who was probably a Jewish convert to the Christianity from Syria or Asia-Minor. The letter with two parts in twenty-one chapters proposes teachings on perfect knowledge, faith, and morals.

Part I: Theoretical or dogmatic part on true knowledge and faith (chs.1-17)

Part II: Practical part on moral teachings (chs.18-21)

Chapters 6-11 describe how the initiation makes the adoption of the children of God and seals their souls with God's image and likeness. In contrast to *Didache*, which speak most about the administration of baptism, Barnabas speaks much on the

meaning of baptism. Making contrast of Jewish religious practices of baptismal washings with Christian understanding of baptismal immersions, the author describes the effects of baptism in Christian context.<sup>14</sup> Baptism is a requisite for defending Christian faith in the Church (chs.1-16). For him Sunday is the most suitable day for baptism (ch.15.9). From the distinctive features of Christian baptism for Barnabas, there is the possibility of deducing a probable process of administering initiation in three such stages as instruction, baptism, and Eucharist.

### a. Instruction

Preaching of the word of forgiveness before baptism leads the candidates to faith (chs.8.3; 11.8, 11) based on moral principles to glorify God in the Church (chs.6.16; 11.6; 16.7). The "way of light" in contrast to the "way of darkness" (chs.18-21) proposes the means for a good conduct in the Church, because baptism presupposes good acts of repentance (ch.16.9)

### b. Baptism

Baptism in the "name of the Lord" (ch.6.8-9) provides forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38) through the confession of faith and love (ch.11.8, 11) in the hope of salvation. The

<sup>13</sup> P.G. 2, 727-782; J.Quasten, *Patrology* 1, 85-92; R.A.Kraft, P.Prigent, eds., *Epître de Barnabé*, sc 172 (Paris, 1971); R.Hvalvik, *The Struggle for Scripture and Covenant: The Purpose of the Epistle of Barnabas and Jewish Christian Competition in the Second Century* (Tübingen, 1996); R.Prostmeier, *Der Barnabasbrief* (Göttingen, 199); Benoit A., *Le baptême Chrétien au second siècle* (Paris, 1953) 34-57; E.Ferguson, "Christian and Jewish Baptism According to the Epistle of Barnabas:", in S.E.Porter, A.R.Cross, eds., *Dimensions of Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies* (London, 2002) 207-233; E.Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church* (Cambridge, 2009) 210-214.

<sup>14</sup> L.W.Barnard, "The Epistle of Barnabas – A Paschal Homily," *Vigiliae Christianae* 15 (1961) 16-21.



phrase "opening the door of the temple (which is the mouth)" in ch.16.8 indicates the confession of baptismal faith through words. The references to "go down into the water" and "come up" (ch.11.8, 11), and "flowing" water (ch.11.2, 5, 6, 10) imply the baptism of immersion in running (living) water as the decisive moment of becoming one with Christ in His death and resurrection.

For Barnabas the distinctive feature of baptism is the forgiveness of sins (chs.11.1, 11; 16.7-8). The relation between water and cross brings forth forgiveness (chs.11.1b, 8; 12.1). Forgiveness makes a new creation (chs.6.14; 11.1; 16.8) worthy to enter the Promised Land (ch.6.11, 13, 16-17). Baptismal renewal means the creation of a new soul having a new heart (ch.6.11, 13, 14) as the temple of God (chs.6.15; 16.7-8) expelling demons (ch.16.7), and living for ever (ch.11.10-11).

In this regard, as a follower of chiliasm – millennium theology on eschatology – he proposes the consumption of everything to a new creation as the dawning of a new Sabbath of millennial kingdom (Rev 15.1-19). Since thousand years are like one day in the eyes of God (2 Pet 3:8), six days of creation indicates periods of thousand years. This may mean that in six days, which is in six thousand years, everything shall end with the

second coming of Christ to judge the world destroying everything evil and renewing everything good. Then there will be no more sun, moon, or stars, and He will truly rest on the seventh day inaugurating a seventh period of millennium with the resurrection of the dead.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, baptism is a covenant "sealed" in the heart (ch.9.6). Counter to the Jewish sealing of bodily circumcision (ch.9.6), the Christian sealing of spiritual circumcision in baptism is the work of God by the Holy Spirit. Baptism is a process of incorporation into the paschal mysteries of the death and resurrection of Christ (chs.8.11; 9.16).

### c. Eucharist

The document seemingly recommends to some sort of introduction of the neophytes to the promised land of heaven through the allusion of serving milk and honey to them possibly in accompaniment with their first baptismal communion of the Eucharistic bread and wine (ch.6:8-13, 17).<sup>16</sup> The image of this nourishment at baptism indicates also the milk of doctrine and faith, and the honey of promise and hope (ch.7.17), which the baptised have to cherish throughout life for their entry to the promised land of Christ.

<sup>15</sup> Except for Apocalypse, there is no mention of millennium in the New Testament and Christ never meant the establishment of an earthly kingdom at His *Parousia*. J.A.Macculloch, "Eschatology", in J.Hastings, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (New York, 1964) 388; J.Quasten, *Patrology* 1, 89.

<sup>16</sup> Saxer V., *Les Rites de L'Initiation Chrétienne du I<sup>er</sup> au V<sup>e</sup> Siècle : Esquisse historique et signification d'après leur principaux témoins* (Spoleto, 1988) 42- 44.

### 3. Odes of Solomon (before/after 140)<sup>17</sup>

An ode is a complex lyric-styled poem on a particular theme. The Odes of Solomon, Jewish in character with Christian interpolations,<sup>18</sup> containing 42 earliest Christian Syriac hymns with many baptismal allusions though not the whole collection has a baptismal context,<sup>19</sup> probably comes from Syria likely expressing the beliefs and hopes of Syriac Christianity through the mystical experience of baptismal effects and fruits. The odist here, a Pseudo Solomon, not the Solomon of Jerusalem, probably a well known teacher, identifies himself with Christ and describes his experiences of the Lord apparently at baptism. The way the document presents the matter indicates towards a possible taking place of initiation process in two such levels as baptism and Eucharist.

#### a. Baptism

Possible allusions to baptism are abundant in the document. The living water from the fountain of the Lord intoxicates the baptised (Ode 11.6-7; 12.28, 38). Then he stripes of folly and cast it away from him (Ode 11.12), apparently the putting off the old person and the putting on of a new person, for the enlightenment of eyes (Ode 11.14) to see Christ. Baptismal conversion consists in

salvation through circumcision of heart from the Most High by His Holy Spirit, which provides divine knowledge and makes the baptised like the land that blossoms and rejoices in its fruits (Ode 11.2-4, 9, 12).

The baptismal theme of dying and rising with Christ is compared with the crossing of waters of Red Sea under Moses (Ex14:21-31) or of Jordan under Joshua (Josh3:14-17) by Israel as an escape from destructive forces of death to the constructive forces of life in imitation of Jesus (Mt 3:13-17) who passed through the same water (Ode 39.5-13). The baptismal faith in the name of the Lord shows the baptismal experience of crossing the sea of death with Jesus as the way to salvation. Thus the baptised places the Lord's name upon his head (Ode 42.19-20). The hymns explain the fruits of baptism as the divine son-ship, true joy, immortality, and the participation in the Trinitarian life. For him the baptism makes its recipient the harp of the Spirit on which the Holy Spirit plays continually.

#### b. Eucharist

The allusion to the drinking of the cup of milk in the sweetness of the Lord (Ode 19.1) offered to the baptised may indicate the mixed milk and honey given to the newly baptised in the *Epistle of Barnabas* (chs.6.8-

<sup>17</sup> J.H. Bernard, *Odes of Solomon*, Texts and Studies 8.3 (Cambridge, 1912); J.H.Chalesworth, *The Odes of Solomon* (Missoula, 1977); Id, "The Odes of Solomon: Not Gnostic", *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 31(1969) 357-369; J.Chalassery, *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Initiation* (Rome, 1995) 7-16; E.Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church*, 222-224.

<sup>18</sup> R.H.Connolly, "The Odes of Solomon: Jewish or Christian," *Journal of Theological Studies* 13 (1912) 298ff.

<sup>19</sup> M.Pierce, "Themes in the 'Odes of Solomon' and Other Early Christian Writings and Their Baptismal Character," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 98 (1984) 35-59; S.E.Myers, "Initiation by Anointing in Early Syriac-Speaking Christianity," *Studia Liturgica* 31 (2001) 158-166.



13, 17; 7.17). In the early centuries, this was the sign of entry to the Promised Land of heaven of the new members of the Church who had united with Jesus through the Eucharist.

#### 4. Justin the Martyr (d.ca.165)<sup>20</sup>

Justin a gentile from Samaria, converted to Christianity in Asia, and became a martyr in Rome around 165 while he was defending Christian faith through his teachings. His three works known to Eusebius (*Hist.Eccles.* 4.18)<sup>21</sup> – two *Apologies* addressed to emperors Antonius Pius and Antonius Verus, and a *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho* – explain in detail the harmlessness of Christian religious ceremonies administered in different occasions of Christian life.<sup>22</sup> Chapters 61 and 65 of his first apology wrote around 150 deals with Christian initiation.<sup>23</sup> For Justin, the Christian initiation rite includes four steps such as Instruction, the laying on of hands, baptism, and Eucharist.

##### a. Instruction

Instruction meant for teaching the candidates on the necessity of truthful life,

earnestness in prayer, and sincerity in fasting for the forgiveness of sins (ch.61) to instigate their thirst for becoming Christians.

##### b. Baptism

Baptism of regeneration includes threefold submersion with Trinitarian formula at the consent of threefold interrogation in the name of God the Master and Father of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit (ch.61). The reason for this practice is to avoid bad habits and evil conduct acquired from the parental first birth, in order to become the children of God through the second birth in baptism (ch.61). This washing illumines spiritually the baptised in the name of Jesus Christ crucified under Pontius Pilot, and in the name of the Holy Spirit foretold by prophets on all things about Jesus (ch.61). Probably, baptism takes place at an outside natural source of water, and then the baptised come back to the community of brethren gathered for prayer (ch.65). Only those who cleansed by baptism can take part of the Eucharist (ch.66).

<sup>20</sup> B. Gildersleeve, *The Apologies of Justin Martyr* (New York, 1904); S.Frasca, *S.Justinus, Apologie, Testo, versione, introduzione* (Turin, 1938); A.Benoit, *Le baptême Chrétien second siècle* (Paris, 1953) 138-185; L.Schopp, ed., *The Fathers of the Church, Vol.6: Writings of Saint Justin Martyr* (Washington, 1965); G.H.Williams, "Baptismal Theology and Practice in Rome as Reflected in Justin Martyr," in A.Blane, ed., *The Ecumenical World of Orthodox Civilization, Russia and Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of George Florovsky*, Vol. 3 (Hague 1973) 9-34; C.Munier, ed. & trans., *Saint Justin pour les chrétiens*, Paradoix 36 (Friburg, 1995); E.C.Ratcliff, "Justin Martyr and Confirmation," *Theology* 51 (1948) 133-139; A.H.Couratin, "Justin Martyr and Confirmation – a Note," *Theology* 55 (1952) 458-460; E.Ferguson, "Justin Martyr and Liturgy," *Restoration Quarterly* 36 (1994) 267-278; E.C.Whitaker., *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy*, 24.

<sup>21</sup> For the translations of *Historia Ecclesiastica*, see Eusebio, *Storia ecclesiastica e i martiri della Palestina* (Roma, 1964); R.J. Deferrari, *Ecclesiastical History*, Fathers of the Church, Vols. 19, 29 (Washington, 1953, 1955); G.A. Williamson, *Eusebius, The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* (Middlesex, 1965).

<sup>22</sup> J.Quasten, *Patrology* 1, 197-204.

<sup>23</sup> For the English translation, see E.C.Whitaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy*, 3.

### c. Laying on of hands

Even though there is no explicit mention of the laying on of hands for the conferring of the Holy Spirit, Justin seems to have the knowledge of it. His mentioning of the common prayer for the baptised (ch.65) implicitly indicates the prayer of the laying on of hands for the descending of the Holy Spirit as the sealing of the soul.<sup>24</sup> He might have deliberately left out the explicit mentioning of it due to his preoccupation with clarifying the harmlessness of Christian rites to the emperor, rather than the details of the rites.<sup>25</sup>

### d. Eucharist

Baptism takes place within the Eucharistic celebration. Eucharist includes the rites of introduction of the neophytes to the congregation, common prayer for the community present, for the baptised, and for all the Christians everywhere, kiss of peace, preparation of gifts, thanksgiving (*anaphora*),

and partaking of the Eucharistic bread and wine and water served by deacons who carry the Eucharist to the absentees also (ch.65).

### 5. Clement of Alexandria (+215)<sup>26</sup>

His works known as *Extraitae Theodotae* – excerpts from Theodotus 76-86 (PG 9, 694-698; sc 23, p.199-211); *Protrepticos* – exhortation 9, 82-88 (sc 2, p.149-156); *Paedagogus* – Instructor 1.6. 25-52 (PG 8, 279-311; sc 70, p.157-205); *Stromateis* – miscellanies 4.3-7 (PG 8, 1219-1268); and *Eclogae propheticae* – prophetic eclogues 1-26 (PG 9, 697-711) speak about the Christian initiation in Egypt during 150.<sup>27</sup> Apparently, Clement is the first one to use the word catechumenism as a period of formation before the initiation to Christianity. It is only towards 200 catechumenism became an established custom in the Church. For him the whole process in five levels lasts for four years (*Srom.*2, 96, 1), but the initiation rite makes no mention of anointing and Eucharist.

<sup>24</sup> G.Dix, "The Sealing in the Second Century," *Theology* 51(1948) 7-12; G.W.H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* (London, 1967); M.E.Johnson, ed., *Living Water, Sealing Spirit: Readings on Christian Initiation* (Collegeville, 1995).

<sup>25</sup> Analysing Justin's typology used in his dialogue with Trypho, Ratcliff has shown that Justin knew of an anointing after baptism. See E.C.Ratcliff, "Justin Martyr and Confirmation," *Theology* 51 (1948) 133-139; A.H Couratin., "Justin Martyr and Confirmation – a note," *Theology* 55 (1950) 458-460.

<sup>26</sup> P.G. 8-9 ; Victor Saxer, *Le Rites de L'Initiation Chretienne du II-VI Siecle*, 65-99 ; A.Orbe, "Teologie bautismal de Clemente Alejandrino segun Paed. I, 26, 3-27, 2," *Gregorianum* 36 (1955) 410-448; H.A.Echle, *The Terminology of the Sacrament of Regeneration According to Clement of Alexandria* (Washington, 1949); Id., "Sacramental Initiation as an Christian Mystery-Initiation According to Clement of Alexandria," in *Vom christlichen Mysterium: Gesammelte Arbeiten zum Gedächtnis Odo Casels* (Düsseldorf, 1951) 54-64; F.Sagnard, ed. & trans. *Clément d'Alexandrie: Extraits de Théodote* (Paris, 1948) ; A.Mehat, *Etude sur les "Stromates" de Clément d'Alexandrie*, *Patristica Sorbonensia* 7 (Paris, 1976) ; C.Nardi, *Il battesimo in Clemente Alessandrino : Interpretazione di Eclogae propheticae 1-26*, *Augustinianum* 19 (Rome, 1984).

<sup>27</sup> F.Sagnard, *Clément d'Alexandrie, Extraits de Théodote*, sc 23 (Paris, 1948) 229-239.



### a. Catechesis

Three years of moral formation include instructions on Christian virtues like faith, hope, charity, and patience (*Strom.*6.130.1). The formation motivates the candidates towards an earnest practice of those virtues in daily life.

### b. Training

Fourth year of training stresses the practical aspects of spiritual experience through fasts, supplications, prayers, the laying on of hands, and genuflections (*Extr.*84). Fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays urge them for internal purification (*Ecl.*14; *Strom.*3.15; 6.12; 7.12). Supplications and prayers help them to have dialogue with God (*Strom.*7.39.6). The laying on of hands and genuflections (*Extr.*22.5) help them to seek divine help for the following up of Christ.

### c. Pre-baptismal Catechesis

Faith formation as pre-baptismal catechesis takes place during the Holy Week. Teachings on faith and Holy Spirit in this week convince the candidates that baptism is the moment of faith expression through the power of the Holy Spirit (*Paede.*1.30.2). Faith and Spirit nourish the soul with divine knowledge of contemplation for a better understanding of the mysteries going to take place at the end of the Holy Week (*Strom.*5.10.66).

### d. Baptism

Though Clement gives no explicit description of the baptismal ceremony, the

rite apparently includes renunciation of Satan, water blessing, and immersion or effusion. Renunciation of Satan disclaims evilness and avoids old ways of life in order to become worthy for receiving heavenly illumination conducive to the children of God (*Extr.*77.1; *Paed.*1.32.1). Preparation of baptismal water includes exorcism and blessing on it. Exorcism destroys the inferior elements of water, and the blessing strengthens the higher elements of water to make it holy (*Extr.*81.1; 82.2). Baptismal rite seemingly of immersion or effusion (*Protr.*116.4) takes place in the name of the Holy Trinity signifying death to sin and life in Christ (*Extr.*76.3; 80.3).

### e. Post-baptismal Teaching

It contains doctrinal teachings on baptismal imageries as a follow up in the ongoing formation of the baptised. The main concern here is the intellectual formation of the practical aspects of baptismal doctrines contained in revelations. For this purpose, Clement analyses five names of baptism as regeneration, perfection, illumination, bath or washing, and seal.

Regeneration is Clement's favourite baptismal imagery, which imparts divine life and immortality through the putting off the old person as the removal of the old garment of evil and the putting on of a new person as the reception of the incorruption of Christ. This transformation takes place through the baptismal dying and rising with Christ (Rom 6:6-11).<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *Paede.*1.12.98.2; *Strom.*4.25.160.2; *Protr.*9.82.4; *Ecl.*5; A. von Harnack, "Die Terminologie der Wiedergeburt und verwandter Erlebnisse in der ältesten Kirche," *Texte und Untersuchungen* 42 (1918) 97-143; C. Nardi, *Il battesimo in Clemente Alessandrino: Interpretazione di Eclogae propheticae* 1-26, Augustinianum 19 (Rome, 1984) 64-66.

Perfection takes place through regeneration. Through baptism the newborns come to know the Perfect (God); and those who know God lacks or needs nothing, because God is everything. Just as if God is complete and perfect, the knowledge of God brings completion and perfection.<sup>29</sup>

Illumination in baptism takes effect through the divine power of holy and saving light. It makes the vision of God clear, and removes darkness rubbing out sins that obscure the divine Spirit. Baptism provides the heavenly light of spiritual knowledge for a better moral conduct of life to become the light in the Lord (Eph 5:8).<sup>30</sup>

Bath or washing as another baptismal imagery washes away thoroughly all sins, forgives transgressions, removes evilness, and cleanses impurities. Baptismal absolution creates a new person worthy of becoming the true follower of Christ.<sup>31</sup>

Seal in baptism is the identity mark of Christ's ownership and the perfect sign of

Lord's protection imprinted in the soul. For Clement, the baptismal water seals (*Extr.*80.3; 83) and arms the soul with the Holy Spirit (*Extr.*85.3; Eph 6:11, 13-17). Since there is no mentioning of anointing in his baptismal rite, immersion or effusion is considered as the baptismal sealing. Terminologies like "seal of knowledge" and "seal of righteousness" given for baptism relate the sealing also to the idea of illumination and perfection.<sup>32</sup>

### Third Century

This period gives more stress on the details of the initiation rites such as, exorcism, catechumenism, renunciation of Satan, acceptance of Christ, laying on of hands, and anointing (unction). Due to Christological controversies, Church was very particular to keep up certain stipulations for the initiation process.

#### 1. *Didascalia Apostolorum* (3<sup>rd</sup> c.)<sup>33</sup>

This Church order from Syria written originally in Greek in the early mid-third century deals with Church administration and

<sup>29</sup>*Paede.*1.6.25.1; 1.6.26.2-3; 1.6.27.2; A.Orbe, "Teologie bautismal de Clemente Alejandrino segun Paed. 1, 26, 3-27, 2," *Gregorianum* 36 (1955) 410-448.

<sup>30</sup>*Paede.*1.6.25.1; 1.6.26.2; 1.6.27.2-3; 1.6.28.2; 1.6.29-30; *Strom.*5.10.64.4; A.Choufrine, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis: Studies in Clement of Alezandria's Appropriation of His Background* (New York, 2002) 41-45, 69-76.

<sup>31</sup>*Paede.*1.6.26.2; 1.6.29-30.1; 1.6.50.4; J.Ysebaert, *Greek Baptismal Terminology: Its Origin and Early Development* (Nijmegen, 1962) 13-83.

<sup>32</sup>*Strom.*1.5.31.5; 2.3.11.2; 2.9.43.5; 6.12.104.1; *Ecl.* 12.9; 25.1; G.W.H.Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit: A Study in the Doctrine of Baptism and Confirmation in the New Testament and the Fathers* (London 1951) 115, 153-157; C.Nardi, *Il battesimo in Clemente Alessandrino: Interpretazione di Eclogae propheticae 1-26*, 115-116; H.A.Echle, *The Terminology of the Sacrament of Regeneration According to Clement of Alexandria* (Washington, 1949) 22-30.

<sup>33</sup>F.Nau, *La didascalie des douze apôtres* (Paris, 1912); R.H.Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum* (Oxford 1929); S.Brock, *The Liturgical Portion of the Didascalia* (Bramcote 1982); J.Chalassery, *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Initiation*, 16-23; E.Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church*, 436-440.



liturgical customs. The complete text survives today only in Syriac version under the title *The Catholic Teaching of the Twelve Apostles and Holy Disciples of our Saviour*.<sup>34</sup> The author is seemingly a catholic bishop settled in between Antioch and Edessa around the first decade of the third century. Even though there is no treatment of the administration of initiation as such, the document contains some hints towards it while speaking on honouring bishops (ch.9), reconciliation of sinners to the Church (ch.10), duties and appointment of deacons and deaconesses (chs.15; 16), forgiveness by baptism (chs.20; 24), and the baptismal gift (ch.26). We may take note of such four stages of initiation process in *Didascalia* as Instruction, pre-baptismal anointing, baptism, and Eucharist.

#### a. Instruction

Those who believe and repent over their previous life come to hear instruction on moral conduct of life based on scriptures

during the liturgy of the word in the Eucharist, but dismissed before the communion, because the candidates were unworthy for the Eucharistic service (ch.10).<sup>35</sup>

#### b. Pre-baptismal anointing

Since there is no post-baptismal anointing,<sup>36</sup> this pre-baptismal anointing is equal to chrismation (confirmation). Bishop lays hand on the candidate and anoints forehead or pours oil on the head consecrating the person to Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. It follows the anointing of the whole body of men by deacons and of women by deaconesses (ch.16).<sup>37</sup> This anointing is equal to the consecratory anointing of priests and kings in Israel (Lev 8:12; 1 Sam 10:1-6; 16:13; 1 King 1:39), commonly associated with the early Syriac sources.<sup>38</sup>

#### c. Baptism

The text is not clear on the method of baptism, but presumably, the bishop who anoints the head gives also the dipping in the

<sup>34</sup> D.Gibson, ed. & trans., *Didascalia Apostolorum in Syriac*, Vol. 1 (London, 1903); Id., *Didascalia Apostolorum in English*, Vol. 2 (London, 1903).

<sup>35</sup> Baptism followed the doctrinal instructions. See P.F.Bradshaw, "The Profession of Faith in Early Christian Baptism," *Evangelical Quarterly* 78 (2006) 103; Id., "The Gospel and the Catechumens in the Third Century," *Journal of Theological Studies* 50 (1999) 143-152.

<sup>36</sup> *Didascalia* seems to have the knowledge of only a single pre-baptismal anointing of the head and the whole body. See Spinks B.D., "Baptismal Pattern in Early Syria: Another Reading," in M.E.Johnson, L.E.Phillips, eds., *Studia Liturgica Diversa: Essays in Honour of Paul F. Bradshaw* (Portland, 2004) 45-52.

<sup>37</sup> Deaconess' service in this regard is significant for not making women seen naked by men at the time of baptism. The bishop starts the rite with the head of the candidates and then hands them over to the male and female deacons for their body anointing. For the importance of women deacons (deaconesses) in the Church, see A.G.Martimort, *Le diaconesses: Essai historique* (Rome, 1982).

<sup>38</sup> Winkler G., "The Original Meaning of the Pre-Baptismal Anointing and its Implication," in M.E.Johnson, ed., *Living Water, Sealing Spirit: Readings on Christian Initiation* (Collegeville, 1995) 66-70.

water pronouncing the invocation of the divine name in Trinitarian formula. Bishop can also delegate presbyters and deacons to give baptism. Deaconesses cannot give baptism, but can only do the pre-baptismal anointing of the bodies of women candidates. Anointing of the head and the dipping of candidate in water with invocation of the divine name are the prerogatives of men (chs.15; 16).

The effects of baptism are the forgiveness of sins, spiritual circumcision of heart, and release from idolatry (chs.20; 24). The gift of baptism is the filling of the soul with the Holy Spirit (ch.26). In case of heretics, who through apostasy make the Holy Spirit depart, the reunion with the Church takes place with the laying of hands of the bishop (ch.10).<sup>39</sup>

#### d. Eucharist

While speaking on the honour given to the bishop, the document mentions on the partaking of the Holy Eucharist. The honour of bishop is due to his role of absolving sins, making baptismal regeneration, conferring gift of the Holy Spirit, nourishing with life giving word, establishing doctrines, making the baptised partakers of the Eucharist and the heirs of God's promise (ch.9).

## 2. Hippolytus (d.ca.215)<sup>40</sup>

Hippolytus, the famous traditionalist and anti-pope himself, in his work *The Apostolic Tradition*, though the authorship disputed, deals with the early third century Roman liturgical practices. Chapters 15-21/22 of this work give evidence for the processes of initiation within three years.

### a. Catechumenism

The candidates with their sponsors, three years before their initiation, come to the teachers in the beginning of the period of Great Fast. Teachers question them on their state of life, if convinced they become worthy for three years to hear the word and instruction during the liturgy. Each time at the end of instruction, the catechumens pray themselves and the teachers whether clerics or laymen lay their hands in prayer on the catechumens and dismiss them (Chs.15-19).

In the third year at the beginning of the Great Fast, there will be another examination on their way of life as catechumens. When the sponsors bear good witness, they are set apart for their immediate preparation for the initiation, which follows a daily laying on of hands and exorcism on them. During the approaching days of baptism (Holy Week), bishop shall exorcise each one of them and

<sup>39</sup> S.Brock, *The Liturgical Portions of the Didascalia*, Grove Liturgical Study 29 (Bramcote, 1982) 13, 31.

<sup>40</sup> G.Dix, *The Treaties on the Apostolic Tradition* (London 1992); J.M.Hanssens, *La liturgie d'Hippolyte: Documents et études* (Rome, 1970); P.Bradshaw, M.E.Johnson, L.E.Phillips, *The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, 2002); B.Stewart-Sykes, *Hippolytus on the Apostolic Tradition* (Crestwood, 2001); Whitaker E.C., *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* (London, 2003) 4-8.



set aside those who are unholy and unfaithful. Those who are to be baptised have to take good bath on Holy Thursday and observe fast on Good Friday. On Holy Saturday after exorcism the bishop breaths on their faces and signs on their foreheads, ears, and noses. Then they spend the whole night in vigil with readings and instructions (ch.20).

## **b. Initiation (ch.21/22)**

The initiation ceremony takes place after the liturgy of the word in the Eucharistic celebration.

### **i. Water and Oil Consecration**

At cockcrow begins the blessing of flowing or collected water. Then the bishop with thanksgiving prayer blesses "the oil of thanksgiving" and "the oil of exorcism."

### **ii. Renunciation of Satan**

Each one renounces Satan and all his service and works.

### **iii. Pre-baptismal Anointing**

Following the renunciation, the bishop anoints each candidate on his forehead with the oil of exorcism saying, "Let every spirit depart far from you."

### **iv. Baptism**

The order of baptism follows the children first, then women, and finally men. The baptismal rite contains threefold dipping in water at the threefold interrogation of "do you believe?" in the Trinitarian formula together with the candidates' threefold consent of "I believe." Parents or any family

member can answer the interrogations to the children.

### **v. Post-baptismal Anointing**

When the candidates come out of the water, the anointing with the oil of thanksgiving takes place. Bishop laying hands on them invokes the Holy Spirit sent by the Lord God to come upon them and fill them with divine grace to serve God in the holy Church. Then, taking a handful of thanksgiving oil pours it on the heads of the baptised and signs their foreheads in the name of the Holy Trinity.

### **vi. Body anointing**

Presbyters anoint the whole body of the candidate with the oil of thanksgiving. Then, they wipe their bodies, put on clothes, and enter the church. The anointed ones abstain from bath for seven days in order to retain the power of the holy oil in the body.

### **vii. Eucharist**

They bring bread and wine, milk and honey, and water to the Altar for the preparation rite. During the celebration, the celebrant pronounces the words of institution over the bread and wine; the words of promise of eternal life over the milk and honey; and the words of vivification over the water. At the communion service bishop distributes the Eucharistic bread (body of Christ), and priests and deacons distribute the Eucharistic wine (blood of Christ). Then the other deacons distribute mingled milk-honey and water as a sign of entry to the promised land of heaven.

### 3. Tertullian (d. after ca.220)<sup>41</sup>

Tertullian a convert to North African Christianity in 195 became a Montanist in around 213 and died in between 220 and 225. Tertullian's Passages from *De Baptismo* (chs. 2, 4, 7-8, 13, 17-20), *De spectaculis* (ch.4), *De corona* (ch.3), *Adversus praxeam* (ch.26), and *De resurrectione carnis* (ch.8) explain the initiation rites in Carthage.<sup>42</sup> He indicates the integrity of the sacraments of initiation as a holistic approach to the person. The flesh is washed to make the soul spotless (Baptism); the flesh is anointed and signed by the imposition of hands to consecrate, protect, and illumine the soul by the Spirit (Chrismation); and the flesh is fed with the body and blood of Christ to make the soul filled with God.<sup>43</sup> His explanation on post-baptismal anointing and the laying on of hands (*De baptismo* 6.1; 7.1-2; 8:1-3) urged west later to develop confirmation as a separate

sacrament detached from the initiation rite, whereas the east always kept up the integrity of the rite intact.

Though he is not systematic in describing the ceremonies of initiation, their close correspondence to the elements found in *The Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus indicates the then widespread nature of Christian initiation.<sup>44</sup> However, some differences found are the following:

#### a. Duration

There is no specific duration fixed for the period of catechumenism.

#### b. Time

Though the initiation can take place at any time, the most solemn time is the Paschal (Easter) season and the next appropriate season is the Pentecost (*De Baptismo* 19).<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> PL 1-2; E.Evans, *Tertullian's Homily on Baptism* (London 1964); J.Razette, "La condition du chétien d'après le *De Baptismo* de Tertullien," *Antonianum* 49 (1974) 14-46; E.Dekkers, *Tertullianus en de Geschiedenis der Liturgie* (Brüssel-Amsterdam, 1947) ; F.J.Dölger, "Die Eingliederung des Taufsymbols in den Taufvollzug nach den Schriften Tertullians," *Antike und Christentum* 4 (1943) 138-139.

<sup>42</sup> *De baptismo* 2, 4, 7-8, 13, 17-20 (PL 1, col. 1309, 1311-1312); *De spectaculis* 4 (PL 1, col. 709-710); *De corona* 3 (PL 2, col. 98-99) ; *De adversus praxeam* 26 (PL 2, col. 212-213); *De resurrectione carnis* 8 (PL 2, col. 852-853). For the English translations of the pertinent passages, see E.C Whitaker., *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* (London, 2003) 8-11

<sup>43</sup> *De resurrectione* 8, PL 35, 1840..

<sup>44</sup> F.Refole, M.Drouzy, ed. & trans., *Tertullien: Traité du baptême*, sc 35 (Paris, 1952) 29-45, gives the ceremony of baptism; see also E.Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church*, 340-345.

<sup>45</sup> M.E.Johnson, "Tertullian's '*Diem baptismo sollempniorem*' Revisited: A Tentative Hypothesis on Baptism at Pentecost," in M.E.Johnson, L.E.Phillips, eds., *Studia Liturgica Diversa: Essays in Honour of Paul F. Bradshaw* (Portland, 2004) 31-44, supposes that the Pentecost season might have been the time for baptism before the Paschal season predominated it; W.J.Conway, *The Time and Place of Baptism: A Historical Synopsis and a Commentary* (Washington, 1954) 2-31, gives evidences for the time of baptism from the apostolic age to the council of Trent; P.F.Bradshaw, "Diem baptismo sollempniorem": Initiation and Easter in Christian Antiquity," in M.E.Johnson, ed., *Living Water, Sealing Spirit: Readings on Christian Initiation* (Collegeville, 1995) 137-147, indicates that Paschal baptism was not a normative practice before the fourth century except in Rome and North Africa.



### c. Minister

Although bishop is the normal minister of initiation, in urgent case, he can delegate this function to presbyters, deacons, and even to lay people (*De Baptismo* 17).

### d. Infant Baptism

Tertullian is against infant baptism in ordinary circumstances, because psychologically they are immature to grasp Christian doctrines of faith and morals; and just as the minors are not mature for possessing earthly property, so also they are immature to enter into heavenly affairs. However, in danger of death, he is not against it on condition that the sponsors make promises on behalf of the child's faith (*De baptismo* 18).<sup>46</sup> However after fifty years, his opposition to infant baptism never heard again in North Africa. The Orientals always defended baptism of children due to the divine grace conferred on them even though they are sinless.

### e. OT Antecedents

He provides number of Old Testament biblical events as baptismal antecedents. Creation (Gen 1:1-2) of life from water is

the result of the union of Spirit and water (*De baptismo* 3). Floodwaters and the dove (Gen 6-8) symbolise cleansing and Holy Spirit respectively (*De baptismo* 8). Crossing of Red Sea water (Ex 14:26-31) signifies liberation from slavery and destruction of enemies (*De baptismo* 9.1). The piece of wood thrown into bitter water to sweeten it (Ex 15:22-26) represents Christ's turning of natural springs into healthful waters (*De baptismo* 9.2; *Adversus Judaeos* 13). Water from rock to quench thirst (Ex 17:6; Num 20:7-11; 1Cor 10:4) typifies Christ's giving of baptism to quench spiritual thirst (*De baptismo* 9.3). Naaman's sevenfold washing in Jordan (2 Kings 5:10) contrasts with Christ's single washing of purification (*Contra Marcion* 4.9).<sup>47</sup>

### 4. Cyprian (d.258)<sup>48</sup>

Cyprian of Carthage (248-258) before becoming a martyr wrote 81 letters in between 249-258 from his hiding place explaining the doctrinal and disciplinary problems in North African Church to guide the faithful during persecution in the mid-third century.<sup>49</sup> Among them a few related to the baptismal rites written in 256 concerned with the controversy on rebaptism of heretics are

<sup>46</sup> For the evidence of sponsors in the Church and its later development as spiritual paternity, see T.Maertens, *Histoire et pastorale du rituel du catéchunénat et du baptême* (Bruges, 1962) 71-77, 97-101, 137-145. For the responsibilities of the sponsors as giving encouragement, counsel, and corrections on faith and morals, see R.F.G.Burnish, "The Role of the Godfather in the East in the Fourth century," *Studia Patristica* 17.2 (1982) 558-564.

<sup>47</sup> E.Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church*, 337.

<sup>48</sup> PL 4; G.Hartel, ed., *Cypriani opera*, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum III.2 (Wien, 1871); Saxer V., *Les Rites de L'Initiation Chrétienne du II<sup>e</sup> au VI<sup>e</sup> Siècle: Esquisse historique et signification d'après leur principaux témoins*, 139-143.

<sup>49</sup> G.W.Clarke, *The Letters of St.Cyprian of Carthage*, Ancient Christian Writers, Vols. 43-44, 46-47 (New York, 1984-1989).

the *Letters 69 to Magnus* 7, 12; *70 to Januarius* 1, 2; *73 to Jubaianus* 6, 9; *74 to Pompeius* 5; and *75 Firmilian to Cyprian* 10.<sup>50</sup> Cyprian's initiation rites are consistent with those of Tertullian.<sup>51</sup> However, his treatises on the controversies like infant baptism, heretic/schismatic baptism, and clinical/sickbed baptism give further information on the development of initiation during his period.

### a. Infant baptism

Unlike Tertullian, Cyprian supports infant baptism. Baptism for children is an urgent need to liberate them from the bondage of sin and death caused by Adam to his descendants (Rom 5:12-14). It is better to get rid of this obstacle as early as possible for a better growth in holiness (*Letter 64 to Fidus* 2-6).

### b. Clinical baptism

Cyprian defends the clinical baptism of aspersion (sprinkling) given to those who are seriously ill at their sickbed in contrast to the normal usage of immersion practised in the Church. For him this is less effective due to

the lack of the fullness of the Spirit, since it misses the act of immersion. However, the sacrament of salvation never reduces or weakens God's mercy in bestowing divine grace to the receiver when necessity compels to abridge the rite to the sprinkling (Ez 36:25-26; Num 8:7). It is better to give a substitute version than not to give it at all. Hence, the sprinkling of water in case of emergency also holds equally valid as washing (*Letter 69 to Magnus* 12)<sup>52</sup>. This acknowledgement of the efficacy of sprinkling or pouring in such extraordinary cases might have later prompted the west to substitute it for immersion in ordinary cases also.

### c. Heretical baptism

Heretics should be re-baptised before they come to communion with the Church. For him the heretical baptism was invalid, since there is no Holy Spirit outside the Catholic Church. The heretical minister of baptism cannot convey what he has not received.<sup>53</sup> Cyprian declared in the Synod of Carthage (251-252) that there is no salvation outside the Church, but without denying the mercy of God.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> For the English translation of these passages, see Whitaker E.C., *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy*, 12-13.

<sup>51</sup> For the ceremonies of initiation, see V.Saxer, *Vie liturgique et quotidienne a Carthage vers le milieu du IIIe siècle: Le témoignage de S.Cyprien et de ses contemporains d'Afrique* (Vatican City, 1969) 106-144; E.Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church*, 351-355.

<sup>52</sup> For Cyprian's theology and its benefits of baptism, see P.Gaudette, "Baptême et vie chrétienne chez saint Cyprien de Carthage," *L'aval Théologique et Philosophique* 27 (1971) 163-190, 251-257.

<sup>53</sup> *Letter 69 to Magnus* 1-3; *Letter 70 to Januarius* 1, 3; *Letter 73 to Jubaianus* 13. 25; G.W.Clarke, *The Letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage*, Ancient Christian Writers 47, 173-174; Sebastian J.J., "...Baptisma unum in sancta ecclesia..." in *A Theological Appraisal of the Baptismal Controversy in the Work and Writings of Cyprian of Carthage* (Ammersbeck, 1977) 73-85.

<sup>54</sup> *Letter 73 to Jubaianus* 21, (251-252); M Bévenot, "Salus extra ecclesiam non est" (Cyprian)," in H.J.Auf der Maur et al, eds., *Fides sacramenti, sacramentum fidei* (Assen, 1981) 97-105.



## Conclusion

The history of sacraments of initiation shows the preoccupation of the Church to make her children perfect from the very beginning of their Christian life for an integral growth of their spiritual life. For this purpose, she maintained always the unity of the sacraments of baptism, chrismation, and Eucharist in the Christian initiation rite. Both in the adult and child<sup>55</sup> initiations this is the case with the very beginning of Christianity. The apostles knowing the mind of Christ in this respect administered the sacraments of initiation always together in their ministry. For the apostles the initiation rite consisted in three such stages as, 1. Preparation (1 Thessalonians; Hebrews 6) with plausible baptismal catechesis as ethical instructions;<sup>56</sup> 2. Immersion in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; Rom 10:9; 1Cor 6:11) or in the name of Trinity (Mt 28: 19) performed in a river or pool or in a domestic bath-house by the apostles or deacons (Acts 2:37-42; 8:12-17; 10:44-48; 19:1-7; 1 Cor 1:14-16); and 3. Laying on of hands and/or possible anointing by the apostles alone.

Passing from the New Testament time to the second century, though the evidence is scanty and varied from place to place, the initiation rite consists in such three stages as, 1. Formal preparation for baptism through moral instructions with fasting by the candidates, minister, and the congregation; 2. Threefold immersion by the local bishop with interrogative Trinitarian formula

performed outdoors at natural source of water; or threefold pouring of water in the absence of enough water; and 3. Eucharist, the right of the baptised, makes the entry to the perfect union with the body of Christ, the Church, possible. The apparent silence on the laying on of hands and the anointing in this period does not rule out their absence. The preoccupations in explaining the harmlessness of the initiation rite of this period due to persecutions might have prompted not to go into the detail account in matters of liturgy. Anyhow, the prayer for the descending of the Holy Spirit on the newly baptised before the Eucharist gives allusion to those rites.

Third century initiation consisted such an integral whole of the rite as water blessing, renunciation of Satan, exorcism, immersion, anointing, hand-laying, sealing with the signing of the cross, and Eucharist. Catechumenism attained a much-developed form. Easter became the most fitting date for initiation. Normal minister was the bishop, but could delegate his power according to the urgent need of the situation. The laying on of hands became the prerogative of the bishop. Controversy in child initiation over ruled. Problems on clinical and heretical initiations solved. Thus, from the New Testament time until third century, we see a gradual development in the ceremonial rites of initiation without affecting the integrity of the sacraments of baptism, chrismation, and Eucharist as one unit giving full entry to the Christian life in the Church.

<sup>55</sup> Normal candidates were the adults, but at the conversion of the whole household included children also. See J. Jeremias, *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries* (London, 1960); Id., *The Origins of Infant Baptism* (London, 1963); K. Aland, *Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?* (London, 1963).

<sup>56</sup> P. Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Catechism* (Cambridge, 1940); E. G. Selwyn, *Commentary on 1 Peter* (Macmillan, 1946) 363-466.



# The Eschatological Character of the Propria of the Qurbana

Dr. George Thakadiyel

## Introduction

In order to understand the richness of the East Syrian liturgical tradition one must go to the great and vast world of the *Hudra* (ܡܠܚܘܬܐ) of the Church of the East. The *Hudra* is a principal liturgical book, which contains primarily, the Divine Office and the variable prayers of the Qurbana for the entire cycle of the liturgical year.<sup>1</sup> At present many liturgical scholars are particularly interested in the *Hudra* as it contains a large number of liturgical chants of great theological interest which are important sources for our knowledge of the theology of the Church of the East.<sup>2</sup> Hence, in order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the eschatological vision of the East Syriac Qurbana it is necessary to turn to the prayers in the Propria which form the variable part of the Qurbana. The present chapter begins

with an examination of the eschatological character of the East Syriac *Hudra* and proceeds to study the important eschatological themes found in the variable prayers of the Qurbana.

## 1. The Origin of the East Syriac Propria

Although not much is known about the early history of the East Syriac *Hudra*, its antiquity, theological richness and magnificence call for no proof or confirmation.<sup>3</sup> The primitive *Hudra* consisted mainly of Psalms and readings from the OT and NT to be read on different days and feasts. To this primitive basis of the *Hudra* were added, in the course of time, hymns and prayers taken mainly from the ecclesiastical writings of the famous Syriac

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<sup>1</sup> In some older manuscripts *Hudra* is supplemented by *Gazza* and *Kaskol*, see below footnote no. 9.

<sup>2</sup> W. F. MACOMBER, "A List of the Known Manuscripts of the Chaldean Hudra", *OCP* 36 (1970) 120-122. Hereafter MACOMBER, "Hudra".

<sup>3</sup> For details regarding the authenticity and antiquity of the East Syriac *Hudra*, see CLERUS, "Part of Mary in the Work of Redemption according to Chaldean Breviary", *The Harp* XXI (2006) 136-138. Hereafter CLERUS, "Part of Mary". In the introduction of the *Breviarium* (1938) Cardinal Tisserant says: "Oriental Rites in their own wonderful perfection are like the precious stones that adorn the brilliant crown of Christ the Eternal King". P. BEDJAN, *Breviarium iuxta ritum Syrorum Orientalium id est Chaldaeorum*, 3 vols, Rome 1938; revised new edition in one volume, (Rome, 2002) 6. Hereafter BEDJAN, *Breviarium* I, II, III.



Fathers like Ephrem<sup>1</sup> (d. 373), Jacob of Nisibis (d. 350), Catholicos Simon Bar Sabbae (d. 341), Marutha of Maipharkat (d. ca. 420), Narsai (d. 502) and Babai the Great (d. 608/609).<sup>4</sup> The compilation of *Hudra* for the whole liturgical year is traditionally attributed to Catholicos Išo Yahb III (650-658) and his collaborator, the monk 'Enaniso' at the *Upper Monastery* (ܩܝܬܐ ܕܥܢܝܣܐ) of Mar Gabriel and Mar Abraham in Mosul.<sup>5</sup> A final and decisive redaction of these hymns and prayers was done again at the Upper Monastery around 1250.<sup>6</sup> The Chaldean

Lazarist, Paul Bedjan,<sup>7</sup> after consulting different manuscripts, brought to light in 1886-1887 his edition of the present three volume Chaldean breviary: *Breviarium iuxta ritum Syrorum Orientalium id est Chaldaneorum*. A reprint of this breviary was made under the supervision of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in Rome, in 1938, for the use of the catholic Chaldeans and Syo-Malabarians.<sup>8</sup> These volumes contain the various hymns and prayers from the *Hudra*, *Gazza* and *Kaskul*.<sup>9</sup> In 2002 the Congregation for the

<sup>4</sup> BEDJAN, *Breviarium* I, 7; S. PUDICHERY, *Ramsa. An Analysis and Interpretation of the Chaldean Vespers* (Bangalore, 1972) 2-4. Hereafter PUDICHERY, *Ramsa*; R. F. TAFT, *Liturgy of the Hours in East and West* (Collegeville, Minnesota 1986) 226. Hereafter TAFT, *Liturgy of the Hours*; P. KURUTHUKULANGARA, *Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord in the Chaldean and Malabar Liturgical Year—a Study of the Sources* (Kottayam, 1989) 78. Hereafter KURUTHUKULANGARA, *Feast of the Nativity*; J. MOOLAN, "The Evolution of the East Syrian Divine Office in the Syro-Malabar Church", *CO* 29 (2008) 74-76. Hereafter MOOLAN, "Evolution of the East Syrian Divine Office"; J. MATEOS, *Lelya-Sapra: Les offices chaldéens de la nuit et du matin*, OCA 156, (Rome, 1959) 52-55. Hereafter MATEOS, "Les matines Chaldeenes"; F. C. TRÉVEDY, "L'organisation du cycle annuel" in F. C. TRÉVEDY & I. JURASZ, eds., *Les liturgies syriaques* (Paris, 2006) 14-20; TRÉVEDY, "Le Cycle Annuel".

<sup>5</sup> *Išo Yahb Patriarchae III: Liber Epistularum*, R. DUVAL, ed. & trans., CSCO, series secunda, tomus LXIV (Roma, 1915) 2. Hereafter IŠO YAHB III, *Liber Epistularum*; A. BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922) 198. Hereafter BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte*. According to Macomber there is no compelling reason for doubting this traditional attribution; cf. MACOMBER, "Hudra", 121. For details regarding the life and liturgical reforms of Išo Yahb III, see J. MOOLAN, *Paurastya Suriyani Calendar* (Mal.), (East Syrian Church Calendar) (Trichur, 1986) 14-15. Hereafter MOOLAN, *Calendar*; TRÉVEDY, "Le Cycle Annuel", 25-29.

<sup>6</sup> G. P. BADGER, *The Nestorians and Their Rituals*, 2 vols (London, 1852) II, 22. Hereafter BADGER, *The Nestorians*; KURUTHUKULANGARA, *Feast of the Nativity*, 80; MOOLAN, "Evolution of the East Syrian Divine Office", 70.

<sup>7</sup> For biographical information concerning P. Bedjan (1838-1920), see J. M. VOSTÉ, "Paul Bedjan, le lazarisiste persan", *OCP* 11 (1945) 45-102. Hereafter VOSTÉ, "Paul Bedjan".

<sup>8</sup> See BEDJAN, *Breviarium*.

<sup>9</sup> *Hudra* means 'cycle' and is the principal liturgical book containing offices for the entire liturgical year. *Gazza* means 'treasury' and it contains additional chants for the feasts and commemorations. *Kaskul* means 'collection from all' and contains the complete text of offices for the week days throughout the liturgical year. In the old manuscripts the chants from the *Kaskul* and *Gazza* are also frequently incorporated into *Hudra* in abbreviated form, either in the body of the text or in appendix; cf. MACOMBER, "Hudra", 212. See also BADGER, *The Nestorians* II, 22-23; MATEOS, *Lelya-Sapra*, 5-11; PUDICHERY, *Ramsa*, 6-7. Macomber gives a detailed chronological list of the known *Hudra* manuscripts; cf. MACOMBER, "Hudra", 124-134; See also MATEOS, *Lelya-Sapra*, xix; J. MOOLAN, *The Period of Annunciation-Nativity in the East Syrian Calendar. Its Background*

Oriental Churches issued a new edition of the Chaldean breviary in one volume.<sup>10</sup> The Assyrian Church of the East uses the breviary of the Church of the East edited by Darmo (+1969), the Metropolitan of the Church of the East in Trichur, India.<sup>11</sup> Both the breviary of the Chaldean Church and that of the Assyrian Church contain the Divine Office and the variable prayers (*Propria*) of the Qurbana.<sup>12</sup> Each Church in the East Syriac tradition has made its own editions of the *Propria* of the Qurbana in different languages, of which the most important ones

are the *Proprium Missarum de Tempore et de Sanctis, Juxta Ritum Ecclesiae Syrorum Orientalium id est Chaldaeorum*, Mousul, 1901, made by the Chaldean Church, in Syriac language and the *Supplementum Mysteriorum, sive Proprium Missarum de Tempore et de Sanctis iuxta Ritum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis*, Romae, 1960, made by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in Rome, in Latin translation, for the use of the Syro-Malabar Church.<sup>13</sup>

and *Place in the Liturgical Year*, (Kottayam, 1985) 147-153. Hereafter MOOLAN, *Annunciation*. For a list of the manuscripts of the East Syriac *Gazza*, see KURUTHUKULANGARA, *Feast of the Nativity*, 85- 89.

<sup>10</sup> This new edition is the same as the breviary published in 1938 but with the omission of all the duplications to be found in the three-volume edition and an addition of the 'Commemoration of St. Ephrem'. It has corrected some errors in printing. The task of correcting Bedjan's edition was undertaken by P. Yousif.

<sup>11</sup> See *Ktaba da-Qdam wa-d-Batar wa-d-Hudra wa-d-Kaskull wa-d-Gazza*, 3 vols, (*The Hudra of the Assyrian Church of the East* (Syriac text), T. DARMO, ed., (Trichur, 1960-1961). Hereafter *Ktaba*. For biographical details concerning Darmo (1903-1969), see MAR APREM, *Mar Thoma Darmo: A Biography* (Trichur, 1974). Hereafter APREM, *Mar Thoma Darmo*. Both the Chaldean and Assyrian breviaries are identical in structure and content except for some occasional minor discrepancies. The texts in Darmo's edition are rather fuller than those in Bedjan and they provide a more traditional form of the East Syriac liturgical year and its texts. But the main difference lies in the changes introduced in the catholic version in the name of "purification of Nestorian errors". Thus Bedjan has introduced various feasts of western origin, such as the Circumcision and the Sacred Heart and has altered terms such as 'Mother of Christ' into 'Mother of God'. For details, see C. PAYNGOT, "Corrections Made in the Chaldean Breviary", *The Harp* XXI (2006) 217-237. Hereafter PAYNGOT, "Corrections". For a comparison between the two editions, see S. BROCK, "A Concordance to Bedjan's Breviarium Chaldaicum and Darmo's Hudra", *The Harp* XIX (2006) 117-136. Hereafter BROCK, "Concordance".

<sup>12</sup> For details regarding the contents of these breviaries, see BROCK, "Concordance", 120-136. They give the variable prayers for the Qurbana for all those days when there is a celebration of the Qurbana. According to the custom of the East Syriac Church there should be a celebration of the Qurbana on every Sunday and Friday, and on every Church festival throughout the year. It is also directed that the Qurbana is to be celebrated every day in the first, middle, and last week of the Lent, with the exception of Good Friday; also on every day of the week following the feast of Easter; cf. BADGER, *The Nestorians*, 242.

<sup>13</sup> See *Proprium Missarum de Tempore et de Sanctis, Juxta Ritum Ecclesiae Syrorum Orientalium id est Chaldaeorum* (The *Propria* of the Chaldean Church, Syr. text) (Mausili, 1901). Hereafter *Proprium Missarum* and *Supplementum Mysteriorum, sive Proprium Missarum de Tempore et de Sanctis iuxta Ritum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis* (Romae, 1960). Hereafter *Supplementum*. See also *Rusma d-qeryane, w-surraya wa-sliha w-zummara w-ewangaliyon d-metgrey b-hadbsabbe wa-b.e de wa-b-dukrane ak taksa d-Dayra Ellayata* (Mosul, 1924). Hereafter *Rusma d-qeryane*. Now the Syro-Malabar Church is using a free Malayalam translation of the *Supplementum*; see *Visudda Qurbanayile Marivarunna Prarthanakal (Propria)*, (*The Variable Prayers of the Holy Qurbana of the*



### 1.1. The Constituent Parts of the Propers

The variable parts of the Qurbana are usually divided into three groups: Anaphoras, Lectionary and Propria. All the three East Syriac Anaphoras are noted for their eschatological character. The Lectionary of this Church is a combination of the monastic and cathedral usages in which the biblical lections are given according to the spirit of the liturgical seasons and the liturgical importance of particular days.<sup>14</sup> In the present study we do not enter into the vast area of the biblical lections of each day but limit ourselves to the prayers of the Propria as given in the liturgical texts of the three Churches in the East Syriac tradition. Following is the schema of the variable parts of the Qurbana:<sup>15</sup>

Marmita d-Raze (ܡܪܡܝܬܐ ܕܪܐܝܬܐ), Aqqapta (ܐܩܩܬܬܐ), Onita d-Qanke (ܐܢܝܬܐ ܕܩܢܩܐ), Readings from the Old Testament (ܒܝܩܬܐ), Surraya (ܫܘܪܝܐ), Reading from the Apostle (ܥܡܘܬܐ), Zummara (ܙܘܡܡܐ), Anthem of the Gospel (ܚܝܡܢܐ ܕܝܗܘܐܢܝܬܐ), Reading from the Gospel (ܕܝܗܘܐܢܝܬܐ), Karozutha (ܟܪܐܙܘܬܐ), Onita d-Raze (ܐܢܝܬܐ ܕܪܐܝܬܐ), Quddaša (ܩܘܕܕܫܐ), D'hilat (ܕܚܝܠܐ), Unaya d'Bem (ܐܘܢܝܐ ܕܒܝܡܐ), Bathe d' Unaya d'Yauma (ܒܬܗܐ ܕܐܘܢܝܐ ܕܝܐܘܡܐ), Theshbohta (ܬܝܫܒܘܬܐ), Huttama (ܚܘܬܡܐ)

### 1.2. The Eschatological Orientation of the Liturgical Year

The sanctification of time through the celebration of the mysteries of Christ and those of the Church throughout the year is an important theme in the writings of the Fathers.<sup>16</sup> The East Syriac tradition, with its integral vision of Christian life, has a

*Syro-Malabar Church*, (Mal. text), 4 vols (Kochi, 2005). Hereafter *Propria* I-IV. In our study we will make references to this *Propria* also, but will be careful not to consider all the newly added prayers and hymns incorporated in this text without any basis in the original sources. There is an unofficial English translation of the Propria of the Qurbana which also is not fully faithful to the original sources; see V. PATHIKULANGARA, ed., *The Crown of the Year: The "Propria" or Changing Prayers and Hymns of the Holy Qurbana for the Sundays and Important Feast Days of the Liturgical Year according to the East Syriac or Chaldeo-Indian Liturgical Heritage*, 2 vols (Kottayam, 1997). PATHIKULANGARA, *Crown of the Year*. In the present study we will make references to the Syriac texts (*Prorprrium Missarum, Ktaba*) Latin text (*Supplementum*) and Malayalam text (*Propria*), which are used in the Divine Liturgy of the three Churches of the East Syriac tradition.

<sup>14</sup> For discussions regarding the East Syriac Lectionary System, see W. F. MACOMBER, "The Chaldean Lectionary System of the Cathedral Church of Kokhe", *OCP* 33 (1967) 483-516. Hereafter MACOMBER, "The Lectionary"; P. KANNOOKADAN, *The East Syrian Lectionary: an Historico-Liturgical Study* (Rome, 1991). Hereafter KANNOOKADAN, *The East Syrian Lectionary*. See also *Liturgical Calendar*.

<sup>15</sup> For details regarding different elements in the Propria, see P. YOUSIF, "Déroulement de la messe chaldéenne" in F. C. TRÉVEDY & I. JURASZ, eds., *Les liturgies syriaques* (Paris, 2006) 74-75. Hereafter YOUSIF, "Déroulement". We have already seen the general eschatological character of most of these variable parts in the previous chapters. Here we will be examining the prayers of these liturgical elements as given in the liturgical texts.

<sup>16</sup> EPHREM, Syr. text & GT in E. BECK, *Hymnen de Nativitate*, 4:5; 22:1,8; 23:7; 25:1. CSCO 186-187; Syr. 82-83, Louvain 1959, ET in McVEY, *Hymns*, 61-217. Hereafter EPHREM, *Hymns on Nativity*. For discussions on the sanctification of time in Ephrem's thought, see P. YOUSIF, "Histoire et temps dans pensée de Saint Ephrem de Nisibe", *ParOr* 10 (1981-1982) 3-35. Hereafter YOUSIF, "Histoire et temps"; D. BERTAINA, "Christmas

meaningful arrangement of its liturgical year with nine seasons. The liturgical year is a dynamic, 'cyclic' re-living of the economy of salvation which *originates* from heaven with the period of *Annunciation - Nativity* (ܡܘܠܕܬܐ - ܒܠܕܬܐ) and *concludes* in heaven with the period of the *Dedication of the Church* (ܡܘܠܕܬܐ ܒܠܕܬܐ).<sup>17</sup> The other seven seasons of the liturgical year - *Epiphany* (ܕܝܢܬܐ), *Great Fast* (ܦܫܬܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ), *Resurrection* (ܡܠܬܬܐ), *Apostles* (ܥܕܠܝܬܐ), *Summer* (ܩܝܬܐ), *Elia-Cross* (ܕܝܠܝܐ - ܕܝܠܝܐ) and *Moses* (ܡܘܨܝ) - are organized in such a way that the faithful are offered a system by which they are helped to reach their celestial goal celebrating and participating in the mysteries of Christ and that of the Church.<sup>18</sup> The Vatican II points out the basic eschatological orientation of the liturgical year in the following words:

In the course of the year, moreover, she unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from the incarnation and nativity to the ascension, to Pentecost and the expectation of a blessed hoped of the coming of the Lord.<sup>19</sup>

The East Syriac liturgical year assumed its present form of nine seasons as a result of the liturgical reforms made by Catholicos Išō Yahb III.<sup>20</sup> Before this reform the liturgical year began with the season of Moses in the month of *October* (ܡܪܬܝܢܐ) and extended to the whole of November (ܡܪܬܝܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ) and this season was known as *the Economy of Moses* (ܡܪܬܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܝ).<sup>21</sup> The main salvific mystery celebrated in the period of Moses is the

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with Mar Ephrem: The Nativity Feast in Early Syriac Tradition", *The Harp*, XXII (2007) 54-61. BERTAINA, "Christmas with Mar Ephrem".

<sup>17</sup> A. KOLLAMPARAMPIL, "Treasures of Liturgical Patrimony of the East Syrian Tradition" in KOLLAMPARAMPIL, *Bride at the Feet of the Bridegroom*, 77. Hereafter KOLLAMPARAMPIL, "Treasures of Liturgical Patrimony".

<sup>18</sup> For details regarding the celebration of the Christian mysteries throughout the liturgical year, see *Anonymi auctoris expositio officiorum ecclesiae: Georgio Arbelensi vulgo adscripta. Accedit Abrahae Bar Lipheh interpretatione officiorum*, R. H. CONNOLLY, ed. & trans, CSCO 91-92, Syr. 28, 32 (Roma, 1913-1915) I, 25-27. Hereafter Ps. GEORGE OF ARBEL, *Expositio*. See also MATEOS, *Lelya-Sapra*, 462-464; TRÉVEDY, "Le Cycle Annuel", 13-45; YOUSIF, "Déroulement", 73-76.

<sup>19</sup> "Sacrosanctum concilium: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy", Vatican Council II, 4 December 1963, J. RODGERS trans. in *Vatican Council II*, no. 102. Hereafter *Sacrosanctum concilium*.

<sup>20</sup> BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte*, 198. See also MOOLAN, *Annunciation*, 11-12; MACOMBER, "The Lectionary", 483-484; P. KANNOOKADAN, "The Origin and Development of the East Syrian Lectionary System", *CO* 16 (1995) 54-63. Hereafter KANNOOKADAN, "Origin and Development".

<sup>21</sup> Ps. GEORGE OF ARBEL, *Expositio* I, 5, (Syriac section, 2); *Expositio* I, 21-23, 25. See also MATEOS, *Lelya-Sapra*, 107, 286; TRÉVEDY, "Le Cycle Annuel", 30-34. There was also a system of fasting attached to the period of Moses which can be seen as a preparation to receive the Lord at His Parousia; cf. A. MAI, *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio X* (Romae, 1838) 89. Hereafter MAI, *Nova Collectio*.

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mystery of the second coming of the Lord. This system was based on the Jewish practice of beginning their year in the month of *October* (ܐܫܪܝܐ).<sup>22</sup> The significance that the Jews attached to the arrangement of the year was the celebration of the mystery of salvation. According to a Jewish saying: "In *Nisan* they were redeemed and in *Teshri* they will be redeemed in time to come".<sup>23</sup> At the end of the year they celebrate the Messianic salvation, while at the beginning of another year they show in a mystery the beginning of salvation.<sup>24</sup>

Later, Christmas was fixed on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December and the feast of Epiphany on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January. Gradually, the period of Annunciation, as the time of preparation for the birth of Christ, became the beginning of a new liturgical year with the reform of Išo Yahb III. This period is followed by the period of *Denha* in which the baptism and public life of Jesus are commemorated and in the next seasons His death and resurrection

and so on. Here again we find a tendency of historization of the liturgical year in which the economy of salvation is celebrated. Modern liturgiologists are conscious of the defects of this new system. A. Adam points out that it is a wrong conception about the liturgical year that the annual celebration of the mysteries of Christ is to set before the faithful the entire life of Jesus from his birth to his second coming.<sup>25</sup> R. Berger also speaks about the danger of this style of explanation:

There is a widespread tendency, when instructing the people, to understand the liturgical year as a representation of the life of Jesus: from the expectation of his birth, through his incarnation, public ministry, suffering and resurrection, to his sending of the Spirit and second coming. Anyone can immediately see that this approach does not

<sup>22</sup> Ps. GEORGE OF ARBEL, *Expositio* I, 5, (Syriac section, 2). For more details regarding the Syriac Calendar and its relation to the Jewish Calendar, see Ps. GEORGE OF ARBEL, *Expositio* I, 20-21. See also A. ROBERTS & J. DONALDSON, eds., *The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D.325* in *NPNF* 8, (Grand Rapids, 1978-1979, reprint, Edinburgh 1986) 666. Hereafter ROBERTS, *Writings of the Fathers*.

<sup>23</sup> Cited in J. TALLEY, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year* (New York, 1986) 81. Hereafter Talley, *Origins of the Liturgical Year*. The Jewish year could begin in the first month, *Nisan* (April) or in the seventh month *Teshri* (October). The practice of beginning the year with *Teshri* is from Babylonian tradition, taken over during the exile; cf. V. PATHIKULANGARA, *Divine Praises and Liturgical Year* (Kottayam, 2000) 109-110. Hereafter PATHIKULANGARA, *Divine Praises*.

<sup>24</sup> Ps. GEORGE OF ARBEL, *Expositio* I, 21; J. CHITTILAPPILLY, *Mdbbranuta: The Divine Dispensation of Our Lord in the Holy Qurbana of the East Syrian Tradition* (Kottayam, 1999) 46. Hereafter CHITTILAPPILLY, *Madabbranuta*.

<sup>25</sup> A. ADAM, *The Liturgical Year: Its History & Its Meaning after the Reform of the Liturgy* (J. O'CONNELL, trans., New York, 1981) 29. Hereafter ADAM, *Liturgical Year*. See also A. HÄUSSLING, "Solange Gott Heil anbietet, gibt es seine Feste. Vom Sinn des Kirchenjahres", *Lebendige Seelsorge* 20 (1969) 206. Hereafter HÄUSSLING, "Sinn des Kirchenjahres". M. CRUM Jr., "Our Approach to the Church Year: Chronological or Eschatological?" *Worship* 51 (1977) 24-31. Hereafter CRUM, "Church Year".

account for the details of the liturgical year. But it is not even verifiable if we look only at the broad lines of this year.<sup>26</sup>

In the final analysis every liturgical season is an encounter with the exalted Lord in which we look back with grateful recollection at the historical accomplishment of salvation, while also looking to the future with hope for the eschatological fulfilment of the same salvation.<sup>27</sup> Although the arrangement of the liturgical seasons of the East Syriac tradition appears to be 'historical' in the celebration of the economy of salvation, the prayers and hymns in the *Hudra* for all the nine seasons bear witness to the eschatological character of the liturgical year and that of the East Syriac liturgy as a whole. In the East Syriac liturgical 'cycle' (*Hudra*) the last periods- Elia-Cross, Moses and Dedication of the Church, which are filled with eschatological themes, lead to the first periods of Annunciation- Nativity and *Denha* which are also closely linked with the notion of Parousia (2 Thes 2:8).<sup>28</sup>

## 2. Important Eschatological Themes in the Propria

The variable prayers of the East Syriac Qurbana present an integral vision of the Christian fulfilment. While some periods in the liturgical year concentrate more on the eschatological themes, we can find references to eschatological vocation of man and that of the Church in prayers of all the periods of the annual liturgical cycle.<sup>29</sup> Here we make a survey on the prayers of the Propria of East Syriac Qurbana, in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of the Eschatological vision of the Divine Liturgy.

### 2.1. Sacramental Participation in the Death and Resurrection

We have already seen that different prayers and ceremonies in the common parts of the Qurbana lead the faithful to a sacramental participation in the eschatological experiences of death and resurrection. The variable prayers of the Qurbana give us more details regarding these eschatological realities.

<sup>26</sup> R. BERGER, "Jahr der Kirche-Jahr des Herren. Stationen auf Weg der Gemeinde durch die Zeit", *Gd* 10 (1976)165. Hereafter BERGER, "Jahr der Kirche-Jahr des Herren". ET cited in ADAM, *Liturgical Year*, 29.

<sup>27</sup> The historical and eschatological approaches to the liturgical year parallel the distinction often made between *Kairos* and *Chronos* in biblical theology; cf. CRUM, "Church Year", 25.

<sup>28</sup> It is to be noted that the West Syriac liturgical year begins with the period of the 'Dedication of the Church' in which the Church meditates on the eschatological glorification of the Church. The liturgical year of the Roman Church begins with the season of 'Advent' which deals with historical and eschatological Parousia of the Lord. The Byzantine tradition, which is the heritage of thirteen individual Churches, begins in the month of September with the Exaltation of the Cross.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. J. MOLITOR, *Chaldäisches Brevier: Ordinarium des ostsyrischen Stundengebetes* / übersetzt und erläutert von Joseph Molitor (Düsseldorf, 1961) 35-36. Hereafter MOLITOR, *Chaldäisches Brevier*.



### 2.1.1. Baptism: The Participation in the Death and Resurrection of Christ

St. Paul presents Christian baptism as a participation in the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom 6:3-6). The East Syriac liturgical tradition follows the same line of thought and presents baptism as a sacrament of death and resurrection.<sup>30</sup> It is this participation in the paschal mysteries of Christ that enables a Christian to inherit the kingdom of God. Thus the Divine Liturgy advises the believers: "O brothers who are in Christ through baptism and sharers *in the mystery of death and entombment* [ܕܡܫܬܝܚܐ ܕܡܬܝܬܝܚܐ ܕܡܬܝܬܝܚܐ ܕܡܬܝܬܝܚܐ], stay away from unbelievers and depart from pagans, that you may be participants and heirs in the kingdom"<sup>31</sup> Christian baptism is a participation in the baptism of Christ in Jordan which also symbolizes the mysteries of death and resurrection: "Your baptism in water sanctifies our souls and proclaims our resurrection".<sup>32</sup> So Christian life here on earth is already an anticipation of the eschatological life.

### 2.1.2. Baptism - New Birth as the Citizens of the Kingdom of God

In His discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus said: "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit" (Jn 3:5). The Christian baptism is a new birth in water and Spirit.<sup>33</sup> The baptized become the children of the Most High and citizens of the kingdom of heaven.<sup>34</sup> The epiphany and baptism of Christ raised the humanity to the new heights of glory: "By your epiphany, O our Lord, you freed us from the bondage of sin... Blessed is Christ, who by his baptism saved our race from the curse".<sup>35</sup> By His death and resurrection Christ has "made the earth a heaven [ܕܡܬܝܬܝܚܐ ܕܡܬܝܬܝܚܐ]... and the cloud of debts cannot cover those who ascend from baptism!"<sup>36</sup> The Christians live as citizens of heaven here on earth. Christ has freed them from all debts and bondages and has given them the freedom of the children of God.

### 2.1.3. Eucharist: The Pledge of Eternal Life

The Eucharist is the food for those who are born anew in and through baptism.

<sup>30</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 51; *Ktaba I*, 247; *Supplementum*, 31; *Propria I*, 95. See also *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist* (A. MINGANA, ed. & trans., WS 6, Cambridge, 1933) 73, 78. Hereafter THEODORE, *Commentary on Eucharist; The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai XXI*, XXII (R. H. CONNOLLY, trans., TS 8, Cambridge 1909) 54, 41. Hereafter NARSAI, *Liturgical Homilies*.

<sup>31</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 187-188; *Ktaba III*, 235; *Supplementum*, 120; cf. *Propria III*, 590.

<sup>32</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 51; *Ktaba I*, 247; *Supplementum*, 31; *Propria I*, 163.

<sup>33</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 64, 258; *Ktaba I*, 478; III, 589; *Supplementum*, 42, 158; cf. *Propria I*, 203; IV, 879.

<sup>34</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 86; *Ktaba II*, 125; *Supplementum*, 52; cf. *Propria I*, 329.

<sup>35</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 36; *Ktaba I*, 194; *Supplementum*, 21-22; cf. *Propria I*, 106.

<sup>36</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 136; *Ktaba II*, 564; *Supplementum*, 90.

It is *the medicine of life* (ܡܕܝܢܐ ܕܚܝܐ) for those who are affected by the venom of sin and death.<sup>37</sup> The prayers in the *Propria* present the Eucharist as *the pledge* (ܕܡܫܝܚܐ) of eternal life which effects the pardon of sins in the recipient and makes him an heir of the eschatological kingdom.<sup>38</sup> "Let us receive from the absolving altar *the earnest of life* (ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܚܝܐ) which spiritual beings have ministered".<sup>39</sup> The Eucharist is the medicine of new life which has been given to the members of the Church, one which slays the cause of death, the sin. The liturgical assembly is advised to draw near and receive *the life-giving mysteries* (ܡܕܝܢܐ ܕܚܝܐ ܕܚܝܐ), by which Satan, the enemy of humanity is condemned.<sup>40</sup> The Divine Liturgy sees the sinful condition as a state of death and the real life is the divine life which is given through the sacraments and especially through the sacrament of Eucharist.

## 2.2. The Eternal Bliss of Man

The heavenly bliss is beyond human perception and description. The *Hudra* uses different imageries to speak about the eschatological fulfilment of man.

### 2.2.1. The Heavenly Abode of Ineffable Blessings

The Christian life is a journey towards the heavenly abode which Christ has prepared for His chosen ones (Jn 14:2). The fruit of the forbidden tree made a wide path to death and destruction; but Christ has opened for us the way to heaven.<sup>41</sup> The Divine Liturgy presents heaven as "*the land of light* [ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܚܝܐ]"<sup>42</sup> which is "*desirable* (ܕܡܫܝܚܐ), *glorious* (ܕܡܫܝܚܐ), and *radiant* (ܕܡܫܝܚܐ) and there is nothing like it in creation".<sup>43</sup> This is the reward which Christ has prepared for His friends who have undergone and endured torments and afflictions for His sake.<sup>44</sup> So the liturgical prayer warns the faithful: "Alas for him who has not laboured to take delight in the habitation where all your saints have accepted and received the recompense for which they laboured and wearied themselves here".<sup>45</sup>

The martyrs and saints have fixed their eyes on heaven and entered into the ineffable delight of the kingdom of God through their labours. All the children of the

<sup>37</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 97, 100, 144, 222; *Ktaba* II, 603, III, 411; *Supplementum*, 60, 64, 96, 140; cf. *Propria* I, 340; II 420; IV, 752.

<sup>38</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 222, 246; *Ktaba* III, 411, 525; *Supplementum*, 140, 151; *Propria* IV, 753, 774, 840.

<sup>39</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 236; *Ktaba* III, 468; *Supplementum*, 146; *Propria* IV, 803.

<sup>40</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 103; *Ktaba* II, 290; *Supplementum*, 65; cf. *Propria* I, 351.

<sup>41</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 80; *Ktaba* I, 535; *Supplementum*, 49; *Propria* I, 238.

<sup>42</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 185; *Ktaba* III, 224; *Supplementum*, 119; *Propria* III, 581.

<sup>43</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 182; *Ktaba* III, 212.

<sup>44</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 185; *Ktaba* III, 224; *Supplementum*, 119; *Propria* III, 581.

<sup>45</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 182; *Ktaba* III, 212-213.



Church have received the same Spirit which guided the apostles and saints in their journey towards the heavenly abode. With humble obedience to the inspiration of the Spirit all the baptised persons can reach their ultimate goal and “take delight in the *dwelling-place* (ܡܡܕܢܐ) full of blessings”.<sup>46</sup>

### 2.2.2. The Everlasting Glorification of God

The greatest blessing of Heaven is the presence of God and the eternal adoration of the Triune God that is going on there. The liturgical prayers present the heaven as a place of perpetual worship and adoration of God by the angels and the saints: “Thousands upon thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand of the companies on high hallow his honour in fear and trembling”.<sup>47</sup> The celebration of the Qurbana is an occasion for the believers to participate in the eternal worship of the heavenly choir. Here the liturgical assembly is making the angelic hymn of glorification its own: “With thousands of cherubim and ten thousands of seraphim come, let us make melody together, singing, you are holy, you are holy, you are holy, O holy nature, for the holy gift which you have given us”.<sup>48</sup> The aroma of the heavenly worship which the believers experience in the Eucharist inculcates in them

a strong desire to reach the heavenly sanctuary after their death and participate in the everlasting adoration. They are reminded of the promise of Christ that every one who believes in Him shall inherit the kingdom and eternal life.<sup>49</sup> The saints stand before them as models and guides in the way to the heavenly kingdom. Thus the Divine Liturgy supplicates: “Make us worthy, O my Lord, that with your saints we may sing to you within your Kingdom, Glory be to you!”<sup>50</sup> Here the liturgical experience becomes the guiding principle and the source of inspiration for a heaven oriented life for the believers.

### 2.2.3. The Glorious Throne (ܡܡܕܢܐ) of Christ in Heaven

Through His death and glorious resurrection Christ has defeated Satan and his hosts and has become the victorious king of the universe. God made Him the king of heaven and earth (Phil 2:10) and His glorious throne is established in heaven at the right hand of the Father. Now He is “*the heavenly king of kings* (ܡܠܝܚܐ ܡܠܝܚܐ ܡܠܝܚܐ)”.<sup>51</sup> The heavenly kingship of Christ is a cause of great eschatological hope of the Christians because they believe that one day they too shall reign with Him in the kingdom of heaven. On the Feast of Ascension the Divine Liturgy proclaims:

<sup>46</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 128; *Ktaba II*, 530; *Supplementum*, 85; *Propria II*, 386.

<sup>47</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 225; *Ktaba III*, 427; *Supplementum*, 141; cf. *Propria IV*, 763.

<sup>48</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 183; *Ktaba III*, 213; *Supplementum*, 117; cf. *Propria III*, 572.

<sup>49</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 158; *Ktaba II*, 655; *Supplementum*, 102-103.

<sup>50</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 158; *Ktaba II*, 675; *Supplementum*, 103; cf. *Propria II*, 450.

<sup>51</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 190; *Ktaba III*, 246; *Supplementum*, 122; *Propria III*, 600.

He made peace between the height and the depth, and gladdened them on the day of his ascension; and he entered to minister in the divine holy of holies for our salvation, and sat down *on the throne of the kingdom* [ܒܕܢܐ ܡܠܟܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ] at the right hand of the Father who had sent him, exalting his people and raising us up at his right hand, as it is written.<sup>52</sup>

The liturgical prayers present a beautiful picture of the glorious kingship of Christ in Heaven, where He reigns with *glory* (ܡܠܟܘܬܐ), *majesty* (ܡܠܟܘܬܐ) and *splendour* (ܡܠܟܘܬܐ).<sup>53</sup> The Cherubim surround the terrible throne of His majesty; with fear and trembling they cover their faces with their wings, for they are unable to lift up their eyes and look at the face of the glorious king.<sup>54</sup>

#### 2.2.4. Christ the Lord of Heaven of Heavens (ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ)

Christ is the lord and king not only of the earth and heaven but also of the

“heaven of heavens”. The Divine Liturgy sings praises to the king “who rides in the heaven of heavens”.<sup>55</sup> Christ is incomparable in the heaven of heavens because nobody in the companies of angels is like Him.<sup>56</sup> He has dominance in the heaven of heavens;<sup>57</sup> the heavenly hosts of the seraphim and cherubim stand before Him and praise Him incessantly with love and affection.<sup>58</sup> The special expression “heaven of heavens” points to the heights of the glorious state to which Christ is elevated through His redemptive work. Through this expression the Divine Liturgy refers also to the glorious condition to which human nature is exalted as a result of the incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ:

The First-fruits which the only-begotten Word of the Father took from us ascended to the heaven of heavens on high, borne upon a chariot of cherubim, and treading out the way for our race.<sup>59</sup>

The heights of the glorious position to which Christ ascended as the first fruit of

<sup>52</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 160; *Ktaba II*, 676.

<sup>53</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 162; *Ktaba II*, 678; *Supplementum*, 105; *Propria II*, 456.

<sup>54</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 159; *Ktaba II*, 675; *Supplementum*, 103; *Propria II*, 450. See also *The Syro-Malabar Qurbana: the Order of Raza* (Trivandrum, 1989) 8-9. Hereafter *Raza*; *Taksa d' Qudase* (The 'Rite of Hallowing' of the Syro-Malabar Church, Syriac text) (Alwaye, 1960) 5-6. Hereafter *Taksa*; *The Liturgy of the Holy Apostles Addai and Mari together with the Liturgies of Mar Theodorus and Mar Nestorius and the Order of Baptism*, (K. A. PAUL & G. MOOKEN, trans., Trichur, 1967) 5-6. Hereafter *Liturgy*; *The Rite of the Divine Mysteries according to the Practice of the Church of the East of the Chaldeans and Assyrians* (Syriac-English text), Text of the Liturgical Renewal, (California, 2007) 138-139, 216-217. Hereafter *Mysteries*.

<sup>55</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 221; *Ktaba III*, 410; *Supplementum*, 139; cf. *Propria IV*, 749.

<sup>56</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 8; *Ktaba I*, 141; *Supplementum*, 7; *Propria I*, 31.

<sup>57</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 221; *Ktaba III*, 410; *Supplementum*, 139; *Propria IV*, 749.

<sup>58</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 225; *Ktaba III*, 427; *Supplementum*, 141; *Propria IV*, 763.

<sup>59</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 160; *Ktaba II*, 676.



the human race point to the ultimate destiny of the human nature to which each member of the human family is called.

### 2.2.5. Eucharist as the Foretaste of the Heavenly Bliss

The liturgical assembly experiences a real foretaste of the heavenly bliss through its participation in the celebration of the Qurbana. The holy Communion is *the heavenly gift* (ܐܬܬܐܬܐܪܬܐ ܕܥܡܪܐܢܐ) which is given to us for the pardon of our debts.<sup>60</sup> The heavenly gifts are received from *the table of the kingdom* (ܐܬܬܐܬܐܪܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ).<sup>61</sup> During the celebration of the Eucharist the believers can see the companies of angels and saints standing in front of the glorious throne of Christ, praising His name.<sup>62</sup> They can hear the sweet sound of the hymns of the angels:<sup>63</sup> "lo, the rustling of the angels calls to You, and the companies of cherubim and seraphim with unceasing voices hallow Your honour".<sup>64</sup> They stand together with the companies of heavenly beings, worshipping in awe and joy when the heavenly sacrifice is offered, and they sing with the heavenly choir the 'thrice holy hymn'.<sup>65</sup> The *Hudra* depicts the Qurbana as "a heavenly type [ܐܬܬܐܬܐܪܬܐ ܕܥܡܪܐܢܐ]" which is prepared for the believers and it invites them: "Draw near and

take delight in the life-giving mysteries. Drink *the cup of salvation* [ܕܡܝܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ] which Christ has mixed for you".<sup>66</sup> The Propria present the liturgical prayer as the key to *the heavenly treasure* (ܐܬܬܐܬܐܪܬܐ ܕܥܡܪܐܢܐ) and it admonishes that our words and deeds also must be as beautiful as the prayers and hymns that we recite in the liturgical celebrations.<sup>67</sup>

### 2.3. The Eternal Death

The Divine Liturgy gives not only a beautiful picture of delightful life in heaven but also a sad portrait of the eternal death and destruction of man in hell. The *Hudra* speaks about the eschatological punishment that awaits the wicked ones. Here we find the distressing story of a man who has failed to reach his ultimate eschatological goal.

#### 2.3.1. Gehenna (ܐܬܬܐܬܐܪܬܐ) the Place of the Wicked (ܐܬܬܐܬܐܪܬܐ)

The liturgical prayer presents *Gehenna* as the eternal punishment that is set apart for the evil doers. The wicked people are like the weeds which have grown up among the wheat. The weeds shall be separated from the wheat on the awful day of judgement. "The watchers hasten at your command to gather out the tares from the

<sup>60</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 24; *Ktaba I*, 656; *Supplementum*, 19; *Propria I*, 94.

<sup>61</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 239; *Ktaba III*, 486; *Supplementum*, 147; *Propria IV*, 812-813.

<sup>62</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 224; *Ktaba III*, 426-427; *Supplementum*, 141; *Propria IV*, 761.

<sup>63</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 180; *Ktaba III*, 201-202; *Supplementum*, 114.

<sup>64</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 190; *Ktaba III*, 246; *Supplementum*, 122; cf. *Propria III*, 599.

<sup>65</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 224; *Ktaba III*, 426-427; *Supplementum*, 141; *Propria IV*, 762.

<sup>66</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 158; *Ktaba III*, 655; *Supplementum*, 103; cf. *Propria II*, 446.

<sup>67</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 180; *Ktaba III*, 201-202; *Supplementum*, 103; *Propria III*, 552.

wheat ... *The evil* [جَبْتَان] are cast down into *Gehenna*, and the good inherit delight".<sup>68</sup> One has to keep himself away from all acts of wickedness because each one will have to answer to a just Judge for what he has done in this life; for everything is uncovered and revealed before Him.<sup>69</sup> Man's ultimate fate will be decided by what he has done in this world and what he has failed to do.<sup>70</sup> One has a serious obligation to help the poor and the needy: "He who did not give cheerfully to the need of Lazarus was unable to be at peace while burning in unquenchable *Gehenna*".<sup>71</sup> The *Hudra* always uses biblical imageries to speak about the nature of the *Gehenna* and the condition of the wicked that fall there. It is presented as a place of death and darkness under the control of the evil powers.

### 2.3.2. *Satan* (شَيْطَان) the Lord of *Gehenna*

*Gehenna* is the kingdom of Satan and all the inhabitants of the hell are under his command. He always tries to lead the people away from the right path and bring them to his wicked kingdom. The seeds of the word of God are sown in the hearts of the people. But Satan sows the seeds of the tares in the same hearts.<sup>72</sup> Finally, those who followed the ways of the devil come under

his dominion. But Christ has won victory over Satan and his host through His death and resurrection: "On the day of your resurrection death was destroyed and Satan was cast down, and new life reigned over all".<sup>73</sup> Christ has instituted the sacrament of reconciliation in the Church in order to save the repenting sinners who try to escape from the snares of Satan:

Our Lord gave *the medicine of repentance* (دَوَاءُ تَوْبَةٍ) to the skilled physicians who are the priests of the Church. He whom Satan smites with the diseases of wickedness may come and show his sores to the disciples of the wise Physician and they will heal him with spiritual medicine.<sup>74</sup>

Only those who persist in their wickedness will be eternally condemned to the sufferings in *Gehenna*. The victory of Christ over sin, death and Satan is the source of the eschatological hope of the Christians.

### 2.3.3. The Heavenly Bread Saves the Believers from *Gehenna*

The Eucharist is the medicine of life with which the physicians of the Church heal

<sup>68</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 227; *Ktaba* III, 440.

<sup>69</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 207; *Ktaba* III, 311.

<sup>70</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 209; *Ktaba* III, 322; *Supplementum*, 132; *Propria* III, 665.

<sup>71</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 209-210; *Ktaba* III, 322.

<sup>72</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 224; *Ktaba* III, 426.

<sup>73</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 133; *Ktaba* II, 558; *Supplementum*, 88; *Propria* II, 403.

<sup>74</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 215; *Ktaba* III, 366; *Supplementum*, 134; cf. *Propria* III, 676.



the patients who are affected by the venom of sin and Satan. The gift of new life which defeats the causes of death and sin has been given to the believers in the Qurbana. The Divine Liturgy advises them to receive the life-giving mysteries, by which the deadly influence of Satan is overcome.<sup>75</sup> The Eucharist has the power to save the believers from the sufferings of *Gehenna* and it leads them to the eternal happiness of heaven:

This is the bread by which any who eats of it is delivered from *Gehenna*. Then stretch out your hands, O mortals. Receive and be pardoned; acquire life and reign with Christ.<sup>76</sup>

The Eucharist is *the absolving body and blood* (ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܥܡܕܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ) which is offered for the pardon of our debts and sins.<sup>77</sup> The prayers of the Divine Liturgy affirm that Christ will not remember the offences of His servants who have received the mysteries of His body and blood. He will be their saviour on the day of judgement and will deliver them from the eternal damnation in *Gehenna*.<sup>78</sup>

We can notice two things regarding *Gehenna*, when we go through the prayers of the Propria. (1) Very often the Propria speak about *Gehenna* in the *Onitha d'Evengalion* which gives the believers an

occasion to reflect about their own life in the light of the word of God and to keep them away from the path of eternal death. (2) The prayers in the Propria are very emphatic about the power of the holy Communion to save one from the eternal death and damnation in *Gehenna*.

## 2.4. The Victory over Death and *Sheol* (ܥܝܢܐ)

The death and resurrection of Christ is the symbol of the absolute liberation of human race from all its enemies. The Divine Liturgy celebrates the victory of Christ over death and *Sheol* through hymns and prayers throughout the liturgical year.

### 2.4.1. The New Hope of the Mankind

Christ came into the world as the unique symbol of a new hope of salvation for the human race that was through the transgression of the first parents thrown into the dark valley of sin and death. The incarnation of Christ is a sign of *good hope* (ܬܝܡܢܐ ܕܚܝܐ) for all creatures.<sup>79</sup> At His baptism in Jordan, Christ clothed the humanity with *incorruptibility* (ܕܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ) through water and the renewing Spirit.<sup>80</sup> The liturgical prayers testify that the death of Christ on the cross was a turning point in the history of the whole mankind: "By your Cross,

<sup>75</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 103; *Ktaba* II, 290; *Supplementum*, 65; *Propria* II, 351.

<sup>76</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 208; *Ktaba*, III 312; *Supplementum*, 131.

<sup>77</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 215; *Ktaba* III, 366; *Supplementum*, 135; *Propria* III, 677.

<sup>78</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 78; *Ktaba* I, 535; *Supplementum*, 48.

<sup>79</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 5; *Ktaba* I, 132; *Supplementum*, 4; cf. *Propria* I, 20.

<sup>80</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 37; *Ktaba* I, 194; *Supplementum*, 22; *Propria* I, 110.

O our Lord Jesus, our race was renewed. By your Cross we gained life and by the same death was destroyed".<sup>81</sup> In the Divine Liturgy the Church confesses that the Son of God has delivered her children *through the mystery of His death* (ܡܝܫܬܐ ܕܡܝܫܬܐ).<sup>82</sup>

#### 2.4.2. The Celebration of the New Life in Christ

During the celebration of the Qurbana the Church commemorates the victory of Christ on the cross and she distributes to her children the fruits of this great victory in the form of the life-giving body and blood. The recollection of the defeat of death and Satan by Christ fills the heart of the Church with great joy and happiness and she cries out:

Exult and cry aloud, O mortals, for the dominion of death has been destroyed. Christ by his suffering has conquered death, and he has promised life by his resurrection. Behold, the heavens and the earth rejoice, and companies of angels call aloud, Glory to him who gives life through his resurrection to the race of men which was perishing.<sup>83</sup>

The liturgical prayer asks the faithful to prepare their souls and bodies for the reception of *the life-giving mysteries* (ܡܝܫܬܐ ܕܡܝܫܬܐ) which save them from death and corruption and give them life *in the heavenly habitation* (ܡܝܫܬܐ ܕܡܝܫܬܐ).<sup>84</sup> The *Hudra* presents the main effects of the Eucharistic Communion as the pardon of debts, the complete annihilation of death and sin and immortal life.<sup>85</sup> The believers are asked to receive with faith and joy the body and the blood of Christ, for by His death, which was on our behalf, we have hope in resurrection and eternal life.<sup>86</sup>

#### 2.4.3. The Devastation of *Sheol*

*Sheol* is the house of the dead. The victory of Christ over the death was a victory over the power of *Sheol*, which had hitherto held all the dead under its bondage. Christ delivered all the good souls who were under the bondage of *Sheol*. The descend of Christ into the house of the dead, after His death on the cross, terrified the powers of *Sheol*: "If the lions were terrified at the body of Daniel, how much more are *Sheol* and sin terrified at the body of our Saviour".<sup>87</sup> The resurrection of Christ marked the devastation of *Sheol*. On the eve of the Resurrection Sunday the Divine Liturgy acclaims: "Today my heart is glad and my honour rejoices;

<sup>81</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 10; *Ktaba I*, 154; *Supplementum*, 8; cf. *Propria I*, 39.

<sup>82</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 130; *Ktaba II*, 530; *Supplementum*, 86; *Propria II*, 392.

<sup>83</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 131; *Ktaba II*, 556; *Supplementum*, 86-87; cf. *Propria II*, 397. See also *Proprium Missarum*, 133; *Ktaba II*, 557; *Supplementum*, 87-88; *Propria II*, 402.

<sup>84</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 246; *Ktaba III*, 525; *Supplementum*, 151; cf. *Propria IV*, 839.

<sup>85</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 202-203; *Ktaba III*, 288; *Supplementum*, 126; *Propria III*, 629.

<sup>86</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 20; *Ktaba I*, 615; *Supplementum*, 15; *Propria I*, 74.

<sup>87</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 158; *Ktaba II*, 655; *Supplementum*, 103; cf. *Propria II*, 447.



indeed, my body rests in hope. For you have not left my soul in *Sheol*, nor have you allowed your holy one to see corruption”.<sup>88</sup> The *Hudra* presents Christ as *the physician* (ܬܦܝܠܐ) who descended into *Sheol* and healed those who had been afflicted by the venom of sin.<sup>89</sup> Although the strength of *Sheol* was destroyed by Christ, it still exercises its influence on the people who walk in the ways of the devil. The Eucharist serves as a protection for the believers to guard themselves against the evil influence of the powers of *Sheol*. Thus the *Hudra* admonishes the faithful:

Lo, within the Church the medicine of life is administered, which comes down from on high and is hidden mystically in bread and wine. Then stretch out your hands, O mortals, who by your sins *have laid hold of habitations in Sheol* [ܬܥܠܡܐ ܕܬܗܘܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ ܕܢܗܝܬ ܕܢܦܫܐ].<sup>90</sup>

The descend of Christ into *Sheol* and the breaking of the bars of *Sheol* is an important subject in the writings of the East Syriac Fathers. The Syriac tradition proposes the idea of *Sheol* as the habitation of the dead in order to accommodate the departed ones till their resurrection on the last day. *Sheol* is to be seen not as a particular place

but as the condition of the dead who are waiting for their final reward at the Parousia of the Lord.

## 2.5. Man before the Heavenly Judge

The Divine Liturgy persuades the faithful to walk in the ways of the Lord and reminds them that one day they will have to give the account of their life to a judge who is “no respecter of persons (ܠܐ ܢܚܝܒ ܕܢܦܫܐ)”,<sup>91</sup> but a righteous judge who rewards everyone according to his deeds. So the evil-doers are asked to change their minds and turn to the Lord.

### 2.5.1. The Throne of Judgment (ܬܗܘܢܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ) in Heaven

The *Hudra* presents Christ as the eschatological judge whose throne is established in heaven. The eschatological judgement is an integral part of the paschal mystery of Christ: “Christ was crucified, died, and was buried, and the great King of Glory rose and obtained new life. He ascended to heaven and reigns over all, and he is going to come to judge the living as well as the dead”.<sup>92</sup> The wicked persons have to fear the judgment of Christ because He is a just judge who will thoroughly examine the life of each person.<sup>93</sup> A person will be judged by the heavenly judge according to the manner in which he has judged others during his life

<sup>88</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 129; *Ktaba II*, 530-531; *Supplementum*, 86; cf. *Propria II*, 391.

<sup>89</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 144; *Ktaba II*, 203; *Supplementum*, 96; cf. *Propria II*, 420. Cf. Ps 16: 9-10.

<sup>90</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 144; *Ktaba II*, 203; *Supplementum*, 96; cf. *Propria II*, 420.

<sup>91</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 97; *Ktaba II*, 243; *Supplementum*, 61. Ἀνὸς ἄνθρωπος ἄνθρωπος ἄνθρωπος literally means one who does not look at the faces or one who does not judge by appearances.

<sup>92</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 147; *Ktaba II*, 616; *Supplementum*, 97-98; cf. *Propria II*, 426.

<sup>93</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 97; *Ktaba II*, 243; *Supplementum*, 61.

on earth. One who judges himself and does not judge others will not be judged by the eschatological judge also.<sup>94</sup> He who keeps his hands in purity and does not do evil will be rewarded by the heavenly judge. The Divine Liturgy advises the believers to adorn themselves with virtues and holiness that they may be able to stand *before the judgment-seat of Christ* (ܡܕܢܬܐ ܕܡܨܬܐ ܕܡܬܬܐ) with confidence and courage.<sup>95</sup>

### 2.5.2. The Merciful Judge

The *Hudra* presents Christ as a just judge who rewards everyone according to the merit of his attitude towards God and man. At the same time He is a merciful minister of divine justice who is sympathetic towards the shortcomings of the weak and fragile human nature. "O High Priest...we ask from you the forgiveness of debts when you set up your throne of judgment, for you are acquainted with the sufferings of our nature, in which you suffered and were tempted for our salvation".<sup>96</sup>

The Divine Liturgy is confident that Christ will be merciful towards the mankind when He comes to judge and to pay the wages of His labourers and it supplicates *the loving-kindness* (ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ) of *the merciful Lord* (ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ) to treat His servants as the labourers who came to work in the vineyard in the eleventh hour.<sup>97</sup> Although

many, through their negligence of the ways of the Lord, have given themselves in service to wickedness and sin, the divine judge is asked not to recompense their wickedness with punishment, but in His grace to have mercy upon them:

Before your fearful judgment-seat, where all of us are going to stand to be recompensed there, each one of us in his own body, in the fearful searching of your justice, according to what he has done, whether good or evil, have pity upon those have received your body and blood, O Lord.<sup>98</sup>

The body and blood of Christ are given to the faithful for the remission of their sins and debts and they are saved from the eternal judgement and condemnation by the power of the same body and blood.<sup>99</sup> The victory of Christ over death and Satan has saved the believers from the eternal condemnation and they receive the bread of life in the Qurbana as the assurance of eternal salvation and a glorious life with Christ. Although the *Propria* speak about the strict and impartial judgement of the eschatological Judge, the prominent picture that we find here is that of a loving and merciful Judge.

<sup>94</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 182; *Ktaba III*, 212-213.

<sup>95</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 85; *Ktaba II*, 124; *Supplementum*, 51.

<sup>96</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 205; *Ktaba III*, 300; *Supplementum*, 129; cf. *Propria III*, 650.

<sup>97</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 243; *Ktaba III*, 513.

<sup>98</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 202; *Ktaba III*, 287; *Supplementum*, 126; cf. *Propria III*, 629.

<sup>99</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 153; *Ktaba III*, 628; *Supplementum*, 99; *Propria II*, 433.



## 2.6. The Eschatological Nuptial Celebration

An important eschatological theme that we find in the prayers of the *Hudra* is that of the nuptial celebration in the kingdom of heaven. The Divine Liturgy presents the supreme blessing in the kingdom of heaven as a participation in the wedding feast of the eschatological *Bridegroom* (سجند) and His *bride* (خند).<sup>100</sup> All the believers are invited to participate in this nuptial celebration: "O you, who are bidden, O children of the light, draw near and take delight in the wedding-feast of the Bridegroom who has summoned us to new life, and has appointed us heirs in his kingdom on high".<sup>101</sup> The Divine Liturgy presents the *bride-chamber* (لحنند) as the place of perfect communion between Christ and His bride and all the elected ones will participate in this everlasting divine communion.<sup>102</sup>

## 2.7. The Glory of Saints in Heaven

The saints are the citizens of the heavenly kingdom and they are models and inspiration for the Christians who are on their way to the kingdom of heaven. The Propria give a beautiful picture of the celestial glory

of the saints, apostles and martyrs and seek their heavenly intercession in the difficult life situations of the struggling Christians on earth.

### 2.7.1. The Crown of Glory

The apostles and saints have attained the victorious crown of glory through their strenuous life on earth in the ways of the Lord. The cross of Christ was the inspiration for them to confront all the sufferings in their life: "With the strength of your assistance, O our Saviour, the saints triumphed in the trial of their ways, who by your Cross were crowned; for you gave them to drink of your wisdom through the sacrifice of yourself".<sup>103</sup> They were zealous to imitate the ways of the angels and they struggled against the ways of the devil and defeated the powers of the evil one.<sup>104</sup> They struggled with all false religions with the armour of faith and overcame whatsoever was standing up against the teaching of the Lord. They stood mightily in the contest, conquering and defeating all heresies.<sup>105</sup> Christ has exalted them in glory and *crowned them with honour* (خلكه ينفء حنبنند) and gave them participation in the magnificent life of the kingdom of heaven.<sup>106</sup> On the memorial days

<sup>100</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 22, 258; *Ktaba* I, 654; II, 576-577; *Supplementum*, 17, 156-157; *Propria* I, 89; IV, 868-869.

<sup>101</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 258; *Ktaba* III, 589; *Supplementum*, 157-158; cf. *Propria* IV, 879.

<sup>102</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 50, 256; *Ktaba* I, 740; III, 577; *Supplementum*, 30, 156; *Propria* I, 154; IV, 868.

<sup>103</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 193; *Ktaba* III, 263; *Supplementum*, 123; cf. *Propria* III, 608.

<sup>104</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 193; *Ktaba* III, 263; *Supplementum*, 123; *Propria* III, 607.

<sup>105</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 196; *Ktaba* III, 275.

<sup>106</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 63; *Ktaba* I, 778; *Supplementum*, 42. A Prayer during the Eucharist celebration in the *AJT* supplicates to Christ: "And because you received the crown of thorns for us, let us receive from you the crown that does not wither": *AJT*, 158; A. F. J. KLIJN, *The Acts of Thomas*, trans., intr. & commentary (Leiden 1962, second revised edition 2003) 242. Hereafter KLIJN, *Acts of Thomas*.

of the saints and apostles the liturgical assembly sings the glory to the grace of the Holy Spirit through which they received *the crowns of victory* (ܠܚܬܝܡܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ).<sup>107</sup> It hopes to inherit the same glorious crown in the life to come because Christ has “promised us delight in the Jerusalem above where the just receive their crowns”.<sup>108</sup> There are two trends in the thoughts of East Syriac Fathers and liturgical texts regarding the idea about the eschatological reward of the righteous. Sometimes they present all the dead as ‘sleeping’ in the *Sheol* until the Parousia of the Lord and say that the just have not yet received their reward.<sup>109</sup> But as we have seen above, at times they hold that the saints have already received the crown of victory and they are now enjoying the heavenly bliss. It will be a futile task to try to reconcile both these views and formulate a consistent system from the writings of the Fathers and liturgical texts.

### 2.7.2. The Heavenly Assistance of the Saints

The apostles and saints were *the ambassadors* (ܠܝܫܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ) of Christ who have sowed the seeds of peace on earth. They were given *the throne of glory* (ܬܪܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܬܐ) in heaven as the reward for their labour and toil for the establishment of the kingdom of

God.<sup>110</sup> Now they are continuing the same work in heaven through their prayers and intercession on behalf of the Church. The Christians take refuge in the intercession of the saints and the celebration of their feasts are occasions to keep their memory alive in the Church and to ask their help and protection in the daily life of the believers.<sup>111</sup> On the feast of the first martyr St. Stephen, the Divine Liturgy prays:

O distinguished and holy Martyr Stephen, the First-born of the Martyrs, the first to be *crowned* (ܠܚܬܝܡܐ) and to be summoned to the bridal-chamber of light, beseech your Lord to make his tranquillity dwell in creation. May we be assisted by your prayers, and with you be made joyful in the light.<sup>112</sup>

The celebration of the Qurbana is a special occasion to remember the saints and martyrs who had taken the courage and strength for their life witness from the same Eucharistic sacrifice. The liturgical assembly experiences the eschatological presence of the celestial assembly of saints during the celebration of the Qurbana. On the feast of Peter and Paul the *Hudra* sings:

<sup>107</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 193; *Ktaba* III, 263; *Supplementum*, 123; *Propria* III, 608.

<sup>108</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 33; *Ktaba* I, 677; *Supplementum*, 20; cf. *Propria* I, 99.

<sup>109</sup> See above 2.4. 3.

<sup>110</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 200; *Ktaba* I, 810; *Supplementum*, 226; *Propria* III, 704.

<sup>111</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 35; *Ktaba* I, 677-678; *Supplementum*, 21; *Propria* I, 103.

<sup>112</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 50; *Ktaba* I, 740; *Propria*, 30. The Syriac word ܒܥܕܐ\_ܕܥܝܠܐ means to be crowned, to receive the crown of martyrdom and to get married. It comes from the root ܒܥܕܐ\_ܕܥܝܠܐ which means to crown, bless the marriage, or give the crown of martyrdom; cf. THELLY, *Lexicon*, 160.



How appropriate to sing praise in this holy house, in which there are the prophets, apostles, martyrs, priests, and teachers, and in which the holy table is made ready for the pardon of the offspring of Adam.<sup>113</sup>

The Divine Liturgy presents the Eucharistic celebrations on the feasts of the saints as a foretaste of the heavenly nuptial celebration to which all the believers are invited “to take delight in His wedding feast, that He may gladden His guests in the merry feast of his friends”.<sup>114</sup> The celebration of the Qurbana gives the faithful an experience of the communion of saints in which the heavenly and earthly assemblies of saints come together and they become one Church. The earthly assembly celebrates the memorial of the heavenly assembly which makes intercession for the former.

## 2.8. The Blessed Virgin Mary the Queen of Heaven

The East Syriac tradition is quite emphatic about the exalted position of the

*Holy Virgin Mary* (ܡܪܝܡ ܚܕܝܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ)<sup>115</sup> in the Church and in heaven. The memorial days of Mary are celebrated with solemnity in this liturgical tradition.<sup>116</sup> The variable prayers in the Divine Liturgy recited on these occasions clearly bring out the important role that the mother of God played in the salvation of mankind.

### 2.8.1. The Blessed Mother of the Heavenly King

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the mother of the heavenly King of kings. The liturgical prayer is very lavish in exalting the high dignity of the mother of the Saviour:

Blessed are you, O Mary, whom women and virgins, the daughters of princes, envy. Blessed are you, O Mary, whose name is high and exalted because of your Offspring. Blessed are you, O Mary, for you were deemed worthy to be made mother and handmaid of the Son of the Lord of all. And it is proper that we should sing

<sup>113</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 40; *Ktaba I*, 700; *Supplementum*, 23; cf. *Propria I*, 116.

<sup>114</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 197; *Supplementum*, 125; *Ktaba III*, 276.

<sup>115</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 18; *Ktaba I*, 613. For details regarding the place of Mary in the liturgical prayers of the East Syriac Church, see P. YOUSIF, “Marie, mère du Christ dans la liturgie chaldéenne”, *EM* 39 (1982) 57-85. Hereafter YOUSIF, “Marie, mère du Christ”; P. YOUSIF, “Marie et l’économie divine dans l’office chaldéen du mercredi” in B. VACHÉ, ed., *L’histoire des croyants, mémoire vivante des hommes*, (Abbeville 1988) 829-839. Hereafter YOUSIF, “Marie et l’économie”; CLERUS, “Part of Mary”, 135-164; P. PALLATH, *The Eucharistic Liturgy of the St. Thomas Christians and the Synod of Diamper* (Kottayam, 2008) 101-108. Hereafter PALLATH, *Eucharistic Liturgy*; MOLITORER, *Chaldäisches Brevier*, 34-35. For prayers in the *Hudra* for the feast days of our Lady, see V. PATHIKULANGARA, *Mary Matha : the “Divine Praises” for the Feast Days of the Blessed Virgin Mary according to the East Syriac or Chaldeo-Indian Liturgical Heritage* (Kottayam, 1998). Hereafter PATHIKULANGARA, *Mary Matha*.

<sup>116</sup> The Important feasts celebrated are (1) Immaculate Conception; cf. BEDJAN, *Breviarium I*, 305-317; (2)

to Him with the angels,  
Hallelujah! <sup>117</sup>

Mary is *the King's daughter* (ܡܠܚܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܐ) who is internally and externally ornamented. She is internally adorned with glory and her external clothing is decorated with fine gold. "With gifts she shall go to the King, and they will admit her virgin companions after her".<sup>118</sup> Here the Divine Liturgy presents Mary as the daughter of God the Father, mother of the Son and the spouse of the Holy Spirit. She is most *blessed among women* (ܡܠܚܬܐ ܚܝܬܐ), for she was an important instrument in the salvation of mankind and now she occupies a dignified position in heaven.<sup>119</sup>

### 2.8.2. The Role of Mary in the Salvation of Mankind

The Blessed Virgin Mary had an important role to play in the economy of salvation. The human race became the victim to sin and death through the sin of Adam and Eve. Christ, the new Adam saved the humanity from the bondage of sin and death through His incarnation, death and

resurrection. While Christ stands as the antitype of Adam in the history of salvation, Mary stands there as the antitype of Eve. Through a woman the first Adam transgressed; through the Virgin Mary he was restored from corruption by Christ.<sup>120</sup> God had chosen Mary from among all the women to be the mother of Christ and the co-worker with Him in the divine economy of salvation. Thus Mary stands as the symbol of dignity and pride of all the women: "O Lord of all, holy women who love your name give thanks to you, for you chose Mary from their sex...and lo, holy Church celebrates the day of the memorial of the Virgin".<sup>121</sup> The image of Adam was restored through Mary, a descendant of Eve. Mary gave Christ a human body which covered His brightness and redeemed our race.

Mary became an instrument of salvation for the whole universe. No longer would the earth be occupied with the wearisome toil of sin because the blessed fruit of the Virgin Mary has renewed the heaven and earth and has taken away all the evil inclinations of sin.<sup>122</sup> Now Mary continues her salvific work in heaven through

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Mother of God; cf. BEDJAN, *Breviarium* I, 354-372; (3) Annunciation; cf. BEDJAN, *Breviarium* II, 536-551; (4) Protectress of Fruits; cf. BEDJAN, *Breviarium* II, 592-604; (5) Visitation of Our Lady; BEDJAN, *Breviarium* III, 442-452; (6) Assumption of Our Lady; BEDJAN, *Breviarium* III, 511-523; (6) Nativity of Our Lady; BEDJAN, *Breviarium* III, 523-536. The original feasts are underlined; they are celebrated in the Assyrian Church of the East also.

<sup>117</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 20; *Ktaba* I, 615; *Supplementum*, 15; cf. *Propria* I, 75. See also *Proprium Missarum*, 287; *Supplementum*, 236.

<sup>118</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 287; cf. *Supplementum*, 235-236. Cf. Ps 45:14.

<sup>119</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 7; *Ktaba* I, 142; *Supplementum*, 6; *Propria* I, 29.

<sup>120</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 287; *Supplementum*, 236; *Propria* IV, 733.

<sup>121</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 18; *Ktaba* I, 613; *Supplementum*, 14; cf. *Propria* I, 69.

<sup>122</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 21; *Ktaba* I, 180; *Supplementum*, 16; *Propria* I, 82.

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her intercession for the children of the Church and for the whole world. The Divine Liturgy petitions Mary for her mediation and intercession before the heavenly King of kings on behalf of the humanity and the universe:

O holy Virgin Mary, petition and beseech Christ, that He may work mercies for the world, which takes refuge in your prayer, and that the Church may rejoice, and the children within her may be protected from the harm and adverse activity of the cruel accuser [ܕܢܝܚܕܝܢܝܢ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܕܝܢܐ].<sup>123</sup>

Mary has a special place in the history of the whole material universe as the one who as a part of this universe gave it a redeemer. She has overcome the snares of the devil into which Adam and Eve had fallen.<sup>124</sup> The salvific role of Mary is to be seen in her relation to Christ her Son and it does not diminish His role as the unique and only saviour. So the Divine Liturgy praises her on account of her Son: "Blessed are you, O Mary, whose name is high and exalted because of your Offspring [ܕܢܝܚܕܝܢܝܢ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܕܝܢܐ]."<sup>125</sup> The East Syriac liturgical tradition

is well aware of the salvific role of Mary in the history of mankind and of the heavenly assistance now she renders to the Church and the world through her intercession before her beloved Son.

### 2.8.3. The Announcement of the Good News of Salvation

The *annunciation* (A•D'N<sup>20</sup>) which Mary received from the Angel Gabriel inaugurated a new age of hope and salvation to the humanity and to the whole created universe. The East Syriac tradition gives much importance to this great event in which Mary played a prominent role and which altered the destiny of this world. The East Syriac liturgical year begins with the period of Annunciation and the liturgical prayers bring out the historical and eschatological importance of the event of annunciation.<sup>126</sup>

The announcement which Mary received was filled with all salvation (ܠܠܗܘܬܐ ܕܡܕܝܢܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܕܝܢܐ), for she conceived Christ without seed or intimacy, in that the Holy Spirit descended upon her alone, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>123</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 18; *Ktaba I*, 613; *Supplementum*, 14; cf. *Propria I*, 70.

<sup>124</sup> BEDJAN, *Breviarium I*, 345.

<sup>125</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 20; *Ktaba I*, 615; *Supplementum*, 15; cf. *Propria I*, 75.

<sup>126</sup> The Western Church and many Eastern Churches celebrate the Feast of Annunciation with great solemnity on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. But in the tradition of the East Syriac Church, the whole season of Annunciation is an occasion to meditate on this great event in the history of salvation and the liturgical prayers of this season bring out the salvific significance of the annunciation. For details see C. PAYNGOT, *Thirunaalukal* (Feasts), (Mal.) (Kottayam, 1999) 338-339.

<sup>127</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 7; *Ktaba I*, 142; *Supplementum*, 6; cf. *Propria I*, 29.

The annunciation was the beginning of a new creation by the agency of the Holy Spirit which marked the inauguration of the eschatological age (Acts 2: 17).<sup>128</sup> This great incident in the history of the world was the sign of hope in a depressing situation, the symbol of life in a lifeless state and the mark of fruit in a fruitless condition.<sup>129</sup> Mary was troubled and alarmed by the greeting which she received from the angel of the Lord.<sup>130</sup> But the distress of Mary became the cause of "peace on earth, glory in the heavens, and a good hope to all creatures".<sup>131</sup> No more would the humanity be left to the corruption of death (ܬܫܬܪܝܬ ܕܡܘܬ), but it rejoices and exults in the salvation which the creator brought about in His love through the mediator who assumed the human nature from the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>132</sup> All the evil effects of the sin which Adam and Eve brought about in the world through their disobedience to the word of God were overcome by Mary through her obedience to the word of God spoken by the angel.

#### 2.8.4. The Regina of Heaven

The heavenly perfection achieved by Mary surpasses that of all angels and men. From the very beginning of her life she was endowed with a plenitude of grace, which

was always on the increase throughout her life, in her beautiful soul. The angel of the Lord seeing the plenitude of grace in Mary saluted her "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women" (Lk 1:28). It is a divine acknowledgement of the abundance of grace in her. The Divine Liturgy also, salutes her 'blessed' respectfully. The invocation "*Blessed are you, O Mary* [ܒܪܝܬܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܡ]" is repeated many times, adding to that, her honourable epithets and attributes.<sup>133</sup> Christ has exalted His mother above all angels and saints. "The Redeemer...shed on her a river of graces and made her queen of angels".<sup>134</sup> The Blessed Virgin Mary was the model of Christian perfection for the saints while they were living in the world; now she is their queen in heaven. "The Lord bestowed the mighty power on the virgin and she obtained a singular dignity above all the just".<sup>135</sup> Sanctity draws the soul to the union with God. The greater the sanctity and divine grace, the closer will be the union. As Mary had a plenitude of grace, she had sanctity in the greatest degree; she is closest to God in heaven.

The East Syriac Church has been looked upon with much suspicion and has faced much criticism for calling Mary

<sup>128</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 9; *Ktaba I*, 154; *Supplementum*, 8; *Propria I*, 39.

<sup>129</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 5; *Ktaba I*, 132; *Supplementum*, 4; *Propria I*, 20.

<sup>130</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 9; *Ktaba I*, 154; *Supplementum*, 8; *Propria I*, 39.

<sup>131</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 11; *Ktaba I*, 154; *Supplementum*, 9; cf. *Propria I*, 43.

<sup>132</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 21; *Ktaba I*, 180; *Supplementum*, 16; *Propria I*, 81-82.

<sup>133</sup> *Proprium Missarum*, 20, 287; *Ktaba I*, 615; *Supplementum*, 15, 236; *Propria I*, 75, III, 734. See also BEDJAN, *Breviarium I*, 356, 357; II, 544; III, 518 etc.

<sup>134</sup> BEDJAN, *Breviarium I*, 314; See also BEDJAN, *Breviarium I*, 312.

<sup>135</sup> BEDJAN, *Breviarium I*, 99.



"Mother of Christ [ܡܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ]" as if this Church is not accepting the divine motherhood and the high dignity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>136</sup> But a rapid survey of the liturgical prayer of this Church is sufficient to find out the 'orthodoxy' of this Church on Mariological doctrines. The prayers in the Propria present her as the perfect model of the eschatological glorification and she helps the children of the Church to attain the same heavenly glory.

### Conclusion

When we make a review of the variable prayers of the East Syriac Qurbana, we can see that many prayers in the Propria have an obvious eschatological colour and they furnish us with a clear idea about the Christian fulfilment. The present arrangement of the liturgical year and *Hudra*, organized by Išo Yahb III, is apparently based on a vision of the yearly celebration of the mysteries of our salvation, which includes the mysteries of Christ and that of the Church. The mysteries of Christ celebrated in the first half of the liturgical year begin with the annunciation of the 'Good News' and then follow the birth of Christ, His baptism, death, resurrection and culminate in His glorious ascension into heaven. The mysteries of the Church begin with the birth of Church on the day of Pentecost and then follow its growth and culminate in the heavenly glorification of the individual Christians and

that of the Church. Thus the eschatological glorification of Christ, Christians and the Church is the peak point of the liturgical year. This eschatological goal is always present in front of the liturgical assembly as it goes forward through different periods of the liturgical year.

When we look closer into the prayers of the Propria of the different periods we can see that although the last three periods of the liturgical year are especially noted for their eschatological overtones, the eschatological themes and ideas are not concentrated in these periods alone but are spread out throughout the year right from the very beginning. Thus a historical approach in examining the prayers of the Propria will not do justice to the spirit of the East Syriac liturgical year. If we approach the mysteries of Christ and that of the Church from an eschatological point of view and look at the Annunciation-Nativity-Epiphany episode as a continuation of the eschatological events that we have celebrated in the last periods of the previous liturgical year- as it should be in the case of the liturgical 'cycle' in which both the end and beginning meet-, our understanding of the liturgical year will be very different. Then celebration of the mysteries of our salvation will not be just remembrance and commemoration of some past events but celebration of our hope which makes the Christian life more optimistic and meaningful.

<sup>136</sup>For details regarding the objection of the Synod of Diamper of the expression "Mother of Christ" to be used in the prayers of the Divine Liturgy see the decrees of this synod, session V, part II, decree 1, cf. S. ZACHARIA, *The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Diamper 1599* (Edamattam, 1994) 133-134.



The Syro-Malabar Church has recently introduced, for a period of experiment, the *Propria* in the local language (Malayalam), for a more significant celebration of the Qurbana. But this is a good example of liturgical renewal without taking into account the liturgical genius and spirit of the East Syriac tradition. An impartial observation of this new *Propria* reveals that it does not do justice to the sources of the East Syriac *Hudra*. Many important prayers have been eliminated, new ones have been added and the translators have changed the sense of many prayers without any discretion. A prayer before the *Marmitha*, many *Karozuthe*, two thanksgiving prayers before the final blessing and *Huttama* for each day are newly formulated without taking into consideration the theological and liturgical spirit of the East Syriac Qurbana. The eschatological character which is predominant in the prayers of the Qurbana

is almost totally absent in these newly formulated prayers. For example, we have seen in our study of the different parts and prayers of the Divine Liturgy that the Qurbana becomes more eschatological when it comes to the Rite of Communion and the Rite of Thanksgiving. All the prayers in the Rite of Thanksgiving are noted for their eschatological overtone. But the thanksgiving prayers and the *Huttame* of the new 'Propria' of the Syro-Malabar Church take no notice of this aspect of the Qurbana and they remain as simple prayers for some material needs. These intentions could be included in the *Karozutha* and the Qurbana could be concluded with an eschatological hope which makes the Christian life more meaningful. Let us hope that after the 'period of experiment' the Syro-Malabar Church will get a *Propria* which is more faithful to the rich heritage of the East Syriac *Hudra*.





# News

## **A Seminar in Iraq on the Oriental Churches**

An ecumenical seminar on the Oriental Churches was conducted at Sulaimania, a province of the Chadian Catholic diocese of Kirkuk in Iraq on 26-27 May under the auspices of the Pro-Orient Foundation. The main agenda was a discussion on the draft of the Synod of Bishops of the East and Central Asia, which is to be held in Rome in October 2010. The synod will discuss the concerns of the Church in the East and Central Asia, the birth place of the Churches of the Syriac tradition, but now under existential threat.

## **Death Anniversary of Fr. Placid J. Podipara**

The 25<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Rev. Fr. Placid J. Podipara CMI, a theologian, philosopher and canonist, who is regarded as the prophet of the ecclesial identity of the St. Thomas Christians and the Syro-Malabar Church in particular, was commemorated by the Archdiocese of the Changanassery. At the conclusion of the week long events specially organized in honour of Fr. Placid J. Podipara (April 27-May 8) a book in Malayalam titled "Fr. Placid J. Podipara: A Modern-day Father of the Syro Malabar Church" was published.

## **New Apostolic Nuncio to India**

Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio is appointed Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal on May 8, 2010. He was born in Marano (Naples), Italy on September 7, 1952. He succeeds Archbishop Pedro López Quintana.

## **The Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of the Syro-Malabar Church**

The third Major Archiepiscopal Assembly of the Syro-Malabar Church will be held from August 19 to 22, 2010. The theme for discussion is "Faith in Service of Life". The lineamenta has already been sent to the various faculties and dioceses for initial studies. Topics like materialism, consumerism, media-culture, exploitations of nature, the marginalized people, atheistic trends etc. will be discussed during the three day event. The assembly will be an attempt to connect the gospel of life with the present day complexities.

